

# Accelerating Regional Development: A Study On The Implementation Of Agile Governance In The Lamongan Regency Government

Midkholus Surur<sup>1\*</sup>, Mahmud Aprian Mabruri<sup>2</sup>, Eva Dwi Maulidiyah<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1,2,3</sup> Universitas Islam Darul 'Ulum, Lamongan, Indonesia

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## ABSTRACT

The acceleration of regional development demands a transformation of governance that is adaptive, responsive, and collaborative. This study aims to analyze the implementation of agile governance as a strategy for accelerating regional development in Lamongan Regency. The agile approach, originally developed in private-sector project management, has been adapted to address bureaucratic rigidity, expedite decision-making, and promote innovation in public services. The research employs a qualitative method through in-depth interviews, field observations, and document studies involving officials, civil servants, and the community as key informants. The findings reveal that the implementation of agile governance has transformed bureaucratic paradigms from hierarchical systems into more flexible, results-oriented governance structures. The principles of agile have been proven to accelerate policy formulation, enhance program efficiency, strengthen transparency, and improve public service responsiveness. Nevertheless, challenges remain, such as organizational culture resistance, digital competency gaps among government agencies, and limited data system integration. The study concludes that agile governance plays a strategic role in accelerating regional development by strengthening cross-organizational coordination, expediting decision-making processes, and enhancing governmental accountability. The main recommendations include strengthening leadership commitment, developing human resource capacity based on an agile mindset, and building an integrated digital ecosystem to support adaptive, innovative, and sustainable governance.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The rapid acceleration of global digital transformation has compelled governments worldwide to adopt governance models that are more adaptive and responsive to increasingly complex and unpredictable environmental changes. The agile governance approach, which adapts agile management principles from the private sector, has gained traction as it is considered effective in enhancing policy responsiveness to dynamic environments, reducing bureaucratic rigidity, and fostering continuous innovation in public service delivery (Luna & Marinho, 2023). This transformation encompasses not only technological aspects but also fundamental changes in organizational culture, decision-making processes, and patterns of inter-stakeholder collaboration within government systems.

In Indonesia, strong momentum toward accelerating regional development is evident through the implementation of the Electronic Based Government System (SPBE) and bureaucratic reform programs emphasizing flexibility, transparency, accountability, and innovation in modern public management (Dewi & Suardana,

2023). This reflects a paradigm shift from hierarchical and layered traditional bureaucracy toward a more agile, collaborative, and results-oriented governance model, utilizing information technology as a key enabler. The central government, through various regulations and capacity building programs, continues to encourage local governments to adopt modern governance principles capable of responding swiftly and accurately to citizens' needs.

Nevertheless, evaluations by national and oversight agencies indicate persistent internal barriers, such as rigid organizational culture resistant to change, gaps in digital competence among civil servants, inadequate information technology infrastructure, and inefficient cross-agency coordination among local government departments (OPD). These challenges underscore the urgency of adopting new governance approaches that emphasize rapid adaptation, intensive collaboration, and continuous iteration core principles of agile governance (Iskandar, 2024). Such constraints not only slow down policy implementation but also diminish the effectiveness of development programs in delivering tangible welfare improvements for citizens.

Lamongan Regency, as one of East Java's regions with strategic economic potential particularly in agriculture, fisheries, industry, and tourism has been actively pursuing development acceleration through policy innovation, public service digitalization, and infrastructure enhancement to attract investment. However, the dynamic nature of community needs, driven by technological advancement and socio-economic shifts, has not been fully matched by the bureaucratic capacity to design and implement responsive policies. The gap between public expectations for fast, high-quality services and the bureaucratic reality highlights the need for governance transformation.

Concrete challenges such as slow inter-agency coordination due to structural silos and sectoral egos, planning processes that are not sufficiently responsive to real-time changes and community priorities, and limited flexibility in policy execution constrained by rigid procedures illustrate the persistence of traditional hierarchical bureaucracy that hampers innovation and development acceleration. These phenomena emphasize the importance of an agile approach in regional governance one that prioritizes speed, flexibility, cross functional collaboration, and adaptability to change without being hindered by excessive bureaucracy (Hawari et al., 2024). This also reflects the need for a paradigm shift among civil servants from procedure-oriented to result-oriented and stakeholder-centric mindsets.

The implementation of agile governance in Lamongan Regency remains relatively new and lacks comprehensive academic documentation, thereby necessitating in-depth qualitative research to explore its practical dynamics, best practices, implementation barriers, and effective strategies to overcome them. This includes examining the processes of policy formulation and implementation, patterns of collaboration between governmental and non governmental actors, and organizational capacity to support agile transformation (Ratih, 2024). This study is crucial to provide empirical insights into how agile governance originating from private sector contexts can be adapted and operationalized within Indonesia's local government setting, with its unique complexities and characteristics.

Research by Ratih (2024) found that agile governance significantly improves public service effectiveness during crises by emphasizing rapid decision-making iterations, intensive cross unit collaboration, and the ability to pivot strategies based on real-time feedback. This supports theoretical arguments that the agile approach enhances government responsiveness to urgent and unpredictable challenges while

fostering innovative and contextually relevant solutions. The study further underscores the importance of supportive leadership and a culture open to experimentation and learning from failure as prerequisites for successful agile governance implementation.

Similarly, Hermansyah et al. (2024) discovered that applying agile governance within the Department of Communication, Informatics, and Statistics of Riau Province improved information and data management, enhanced transparency in public information dissemination, and accelerated data driven decision making. However, challenges persist regarding the quality and quantity of human resources with digital competence and understanding of agile principles. The study highlights the necessity of investing in human capacity development both through technical training and mindset transformation to support the transition toward more agile, adaptive, and technology driven government institutions.

Kristina et al. (2024) demonstrated that adopting the agile approach in Surabaya's municipal governance enhances public service efficiency through procedural simplification and process automation, strengthens policy innovation capacity through iterative learning mechanisms, and increases public satisfaction with government services. However, this research primarily focuses on operational level service improvement rather than on comprehensive regional development acceleration encompassing strategic planning, budgeting, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation. This limitation highlights the need for broader research linking agile governance implementation with holistic regional development efforts.

Most existing studies on agile governance in Indonesia have concentrated on specific aspects such as front-office service improvement, digitalization of government applications, or crisis management, without systematically connecting these to regional development acceleration in economic, social, infrastructural, and governance dimensions (Tajem & Subanda, 2024). This research gap limits understanding of how agile governance can serve as an integrated strategic framework for enhancing regional development performance rather than merely addressing technical or procedural issues.

Furthermore, prior studies often emphasize technical and instrumental factors such as digital tools, revised operational procedures, or project management software without deeply analyzing fundamental organizational dynamics. These include the shift from individualistic to collaborative work culture, cross departmental communication and coordination, participatory decision making mechanisms, and resistance to change among civil servants accustomed to conventional bureaucratic practices (Halim et al., 2024). Understanding these socio organizational dimensions is essential since the success of agile governance depends more on human and organizational readiness than on technical instruments alone.

This academic and practical knowledge gap underscores the urgency of conducting an in depth study in Lamongan Regency to comprehensively explore how agile governance can function as a strategic and systematic approach to accelerating regional development while overcoming bureaucratic barriers that impede policy responsiveness, program effectiveness, and achievement of development goals. This study aims to fill this gap by providing empirically grounded insights into the practice of agile governance in Indonesia's local government context.

Specifically, this research seeks to analyze the implementation of agile governance in accelerating regional development in Lamongan Regency by examining the transformation from conventional to agile governance models, the dynamics of

collaboration among governmental and non-governmental actors, and the enabling and constraining factors influencing successful implementation (Alfatia & Fikri, 2024). This comprehensive analysis is expected to produce a holistic understanding of the complexity, challenges, and opportunities associated with implementing agile governance at the regional level.

Theoretically, this study contributes significantly to the fields of Political Science and Public Administration by contextualizing and extending the concept of agile governance originally rooted in the private sector into local government practices within Indonesia's unique socio-cultural, political, and institutional settings. It enriches the academic discourse on governance innovation, particularly within developing countries transitioning toward more modern and digital public administrations (Cellary & Picard, 2011). This theoretical contribution strengthens the body of knowledge on how modern management concepts can be effectively adapted to the public sector's distinct characteristics.

Practically, the research findings are expected to provide strategic and actionable recommendations for local governments both in Lamongan Regency and other regions across Indonesia to strengthen and accelerate development strategies through more flexible, collaborative, and adaptive governance models. By fostering responsiveness to change, promoting stakeholder collaboration, and enabling continuous learning through feedback-driven policy iteration, agile governance can help governments address future development challenges that are increasingly complex, uncertain, and demand rapid, innovative responses (Yuliani, 2021). The recommendations derived from this study are intended to guide regional leaders in designing sustainable governance transformation strategies.

## **2. METHOD**

This study employs a qualitative approach utilizing various techniques to explore the research phenomenon in depth. This approach enables the researcher to understand the contextual implementation of agile governance in accelerating regional development through direct interaction with key informants involved in government processes within Lamongan Regency. Data collection techniques include intensive personal interviews, field observations, and document studies. Through this approach, the researcher captures the experiences, perspectives, and attitudes of informants regarding the dynamics and challenges of agile governance implementation in Lamongan Regency.

In this research, in depth interviews were conducted with informants directly relevant to policy formulation, program implementation, and governance processes related to regional development. The interviews were conducted openly and flexibly to allow for richer exploration of bureaucratic experiences and stakeholder perceptions. In addition, field observations were carried out on governmental activities and inter-departmental coordination processes to obtain an authentic picture of work patterns, organizational interactions, and agile governance practices in real settings.

The study utilizes both primary and secondary data sources. Primary data were obtained through in depth interviews with key informants, including:

1. Government officials from Lamongan Regency, such as the Head of the Planning Division, officials from departments related to digital transformation and public services, and staff responsible for development program implementation.

2. Civil servants directly involved in the implementation of policies related to development acceleration.
3. Several Lamongan residents providing user perspectives on service quality and development impacts.

Informants were selected purposively to ensure their direct knowledge and involvement in the studied issues.

Secondary data were derived from various official documents and relevant literature, including:

1. Regional planning documents (RPJPD, RPJMD, and departmental strategic plans),
2. Development performance evaluation reports,
3. SPBE (Electronic Based Government System) and bureaucratic reform reports,
4. Official archives from the Lamongan Regency Government,
5. Previous studies on agile governance and regional development,
6. Books, academic journals, mass media publications, papers, and relevant reports supporting the research analysis.

The use of secondary data aims to enrich contextual understanding, validate primary findings, and ensure that the analysis is conducted comprehensively and methodologically sound.

### 3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

#### a. Implementation of Agile Governance in the Lamongan Regency Government

The implementation of agile governance in Lamongan Regency signifies a fundamental transformation in the paradigm of local government administration, wherein the traditionally rigid and hierarchical bureaucratic patterns have gradually shifted toward a more adaptive, responsive, and collaborative system. This transformation is not merely procedural, but rather represents the evolution of a bureaucratic mindset that recognizes the urgency of responding to increasingly dynamic and complex societal demands. In the global context, this paradigm shift aligns with bureaucratic reform trends in various countries that initially adopted the principles of New Public Management and subsequently evolved toward more participatory and technology based approaches.

In practice, several Regional Government Organizations (*Organisasi Perangkat Daerah* or *OPD*) have adopted more flexible and innovative working mechanisms that encompass multiple dimensions of governmental operations. Rapid adjustments in the design of programs based on citizens' actual needs are carried out through more iterative planning processes, allowing mid-implementation revisions and adaptations based on real-time feedback from the community and evolving field conditions. The utilization of digital technologies for cross-sector coordination not only streamlines conventional bureaucratic chains often characterized by multiple approval layers but also creates a collaborative ecosystem that enables different OPDs to work synergistically on a unified platform, thereby reducing redundancy and enhancing resource allocation efficiency.

The simplification of public service procedures previously known for being convoluted and time consuming has now undergone significant acceleration through business process reengineering that eliminates non-value-adding steps for citizens. This simplification not only improves service delivery speed but also enhances citizen satisfaction while reducing opportunities for corrupt practices that tend to thrive within opaque and complex procedures. This transformation further demonstrates the local government's commitment to fostering a more conducive

investment climate by reducing bureaucratic transaction costs that have long hindered business actors. As stated by Dr. Sujarwo, S.T., M.M., Head of the Lamongan Regency Development Planning Agency (Bappeda), in an interview on February 5, 2024:

*“...We can no longer work with the old rigid model. Development today requires speed and precision. That’s why we encourage all OPDs to be more flexible, responsive to field realities, and courageous in innovation when implementing programs...”*

This statement underscores that the transformation toward agile governance is not merely an administrative discourse or a passing management trend, but a strategic necessity deeply recognized by executive level policymakers. This awareness stems from empirical experiences showing that conventional rigid approaches often fail to anticipate external contextual changes such as natural disasters, economic crises, or demographic shifts that demand swift and well-targeted policy responses.

The new working model reflects the core principles of agile governance, emphasizing rapid iteration in program execution, wherein each program is no longer viewed as a static final product but as a continuously refined prototype through ongoing Plan Do Check Act (PDCA) cycles. Data-driven and context-sensitive situational decision making replaces the traditional top down approach, which often overlooks local nuances and specific community needs. A strong orientation toward fulfilling citizens’ needs as the primary stakeholders positions citizen satisfaction not as a byproduct but as a Key Performance Indicator (KPI) measuring the success of every governmental initiative.

This transformation extends beyond technical and procedural modifications to Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) it also reshapes the mindset of public officials, shifting from a rule-based orientation (focused on formal compliance) to a result-based orientation (focused on societal outcomes and impacts). Such a paradigm shift necessitates intensive organizational learning, compelling civil servants to think critically, take calculated risks, and assume accountability for final outcomes rather than merely procedural compliance. In this context, leadership plays a crucial role in cultivating an organizational culture that encourages experimentation, tolerates failure as part of the learning process, and rewards innovation that successfully enhances public service quality.

Furthermore, the presence of strategically managed regional programs through integrated digital systems reflects a serious effort to accelerate monitoring, evaluation, and cross-sector data integration previously segmented within organizational silos, each maintaining incompatible information systems. This system integration enables the creation of a single source of truth in development data, forming the foundation for evidence-based policymaking and facilitating horizontal coordination among OPDs long considered a classical challenge in fragmented bureaucratic structures. According to Sugeng Widodo, S.Sos., M.M., Head of the Department of Communication and Informatics, in an interview on February 8, 2024:

*“...Digital transformation is not just about apps or websites, but about how technology accelerates the work of OPDs. We have built an integrated platform*

*that allows development data from various OPDs to be accessed in real time. This greatly assists coordination and rapid decision-making..."*

This aspect is crucial, as agile governance demands rapid, accurate, and real-time information access to support decision-making that remains responsive to dynamic changes. In an era when socio economic conditions can shift within days or even hours delayed information may result in delayed responses, ultimately undermining policy effectiveness. The integrated digital platform also reduces information asymmetry between executive leaders and field implementers, enabling more effective coordination and optimal resource distribution based on dynamically evolving priorities.

The implementation of digital services such as online licensing systems that reduce waiting times from weeks to hours represents a quantum leap in public service efficiency. This dramatic acceleration not only saves citizens' time but also frees administrative resources to focus on more strategic and value-added tasks. Transparent, 24/7 accessible development information platforms foster stronger social accountability, as citizens can directly monitor development progress and exercise participatory oversight that complements formal supervisory mechanisms. Digital-based public participation forums allowing citizens to provide direct input without being physically present in government offices democratize the development planning process and expand opportunities for previously marginalized groups such as women, youth, and residents of remote areas.

These innovations serve as tangible evidence that Lamongan Regency has begun systematically and measurably adopting agile principles in its governance. The digital platforms function not only as administrative tools that accelerate service transactions but also as instruments of democratization, broadening civic participation in regional development processes. Such expanded participation enhances not only the legitimacy of public policies but also enriches decision quality through diverse perspectives and local knowledge that bureaucrats alone may lack.

Moreover, digitalization creates digital trails that facilitate auditing, evaluation, and organizational learning for continuous improvement. Every transaction, decision, and process is automatically recorded in the system, producing a rich database for retrospective and predictive analysis. These data can be used to identify process bottlenecks, objectively measure performance, and develop predictive models to anticipate future needs. The ability to learn from historical data constitutes a key element of organizational learning, characterizing agile organizations capable of continuous adaptation and evolution. As emphasized by Dr. Moh. Nalikan, M.M., Regional Secretary of Lamongan Regency, in an interview on February 12, 2024:

*"...With the digital system, every process is recorded. This enhances our transparency and accountability as public servants..."*

This statement reinforces that transparency and accountability are no longer abstract normative principles but have been realized through measurable and verifiable technical mechanisms. Digital systems create automatic checks and balances that minimize opportunities for discretionary abuse while enhancing public trust in government institutions ultimately strengthening the legitimacy and long-term effectiveness of public policies.

## **b. Organizational Dynamics and Cross Departmental Collaboration**

One of the key determinants of successful agile governance implementation lies in an organization's capacity to build effective collaboration among its internal units, which have historically operated in isolation within rigid structural boundaries. This organizational fragmentation is a legacy of the classical Weberian bureaucratic model, which emphasizes specialization and hierarchy but often cultivates a silo mentality that impedes synergy and horizontal coordination. In the context of modern governance, which increasingly faces complex and multidimensional challenges, the siloed approach has proven ineffective, as most development issues such as poverty alleviation, stunting reduction, and environmental degradation require cross-sectoral interventions that are integrated and synchronized.

Within the Lamongan Regency Government, the dynamics of inter-agency interaction demonstrate a significant shift toward more open, communicative, and solution-oriented coordination patterns. This transformation did not occur spontaneously; rather, it emerged through a series of deliberate structural and cultural interventions designed to dismantle long-standing communication barriers among units. The evolving coordination pattern reflects a paradigmatic transition from coordination by hierarchy to coordination by network, wherein formal authority is complemented by lateral coordination mechanisms that are more flexible and adaptive to the specific needs of each program.

Cross departmental meetings have become more intensive and substantive, especially in addressing regional priority programs that demand rapid, integrated responses from multiple sectors. The increased frequency of these meetings does not merely add administrative workload but instead creates regular spaces for interaction that facilitate knowledge sharing, mutual understanding, and the development of interpersonal relationships vital forms of social capital for effective collaboration. These forums also serve as an early warning system, allowing for early identification of potential conflicts or program duplications before they escalate into larger problems. As stated by Drs. Poedjijanto, M.M., Head of Planning and Finance at the Regional Secretariat, during an interview on February 10, 2024:

*"...Previously, cross-agency coordination was mostly ceremonial meetings rarely produced concrete solutions. Now it's different; we ensure every meeting results in a clear action plan with measurable timelines. All OPDs are required to regularly update their progress..."*

This statement underscores a fundamental transformation from ritual bureaucracy to action-oriented management. Such change reflects the adoption of agile management principles emphasizing concrete deliverables, rapid iteration, and collective accountability. The mechanism of regular progress updates generates positive peer pressure, motivating each department to fulfill its commitments since individual performance becomes visible and comparable across units.

Coordination forums, once ceremonial and formalistic, have evolved into substantive problem-solving arenas. This transformation changes the very nature of meetings from one way reporting sessions to interactive, solution driven forums that activate the collective intelligence of professionals involved. Through these

platforms, diverse perspectives are synthesized to produce innovative solutions that would not emerge if agencies worked in isolation, exemplifying the whole-of-government approach that serves as a benchmark for contemporary good governance.

Coordination mechanisms no longer follow rigid, top down patterns but have become more horizontal and dialogical, allowing each OPD to express perspectives and challenges without fear of negative stigma. The creation of psychological safety within these interactions is crucial for fostering transparency and honesty in organizational communication, as public servants feel secure in acknowledging limitations or failures without fear of punitive consequences. Within the agile governance framework, failure is perceived as a learning opportunity rather than a mistake to be concealed thereby preventing the suppression or manipulation of information.

This shift cultivates an organizational climate conducive to innovation and experimentation in public program implementation. When personnel are free to explore new approaches without fear of blame or criticism, creativity and initiative thrive. This culture stands in stark contrast to the traditional risk-averse bureaucratic culture that prioritizes procedural compliance over performance outcomes. Such a cultural transition requires supportive leadership and a reward-punishment system that not only sanctions underperformance but also recognizes and appreciates innovative efforts even when results are not yet optimal.

Nevertheless, several structural and cultural challenges continue to hinder optimal inter-agency collaboration. These challenges are multidimensional and interrelated, forming a complexity that cannot be resolved through singular or linear interventions. A major technical constraint arises from the absence of an integrated data management system, as each OPD currently employs different systems and data formats complicating data integration and information exchange. The lack of master data management leads to data duplication, inconsistencies, and difficulties in conducting comprehensive cross-sectoral analyses.

Variations in work patterns and Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) across OPDs also reflect the legacy of fragmented organizational development, where each unit has designed its own systems and processes without considering inter-unit integration. Disparities in cycle times, approval mechanisms, and quality standards make cross-sector coordination challenging, as each OPD operates at different speeds and rhythms. Harmonizing SOPs requires intensive consensus-building efforts and often encounters resistance from units that perceive their systems as adequate and therefore resistant to change.

Uneven competency in utilizing digital technology has created capacity gaps among units, manifesting a digital divide not only in society but also within the bureaucracy itself. This has led to a two-speed bureaucracy where some OPDs advance rapidly with digital support, while others lag behind with manual systems creating bottlenecks in collaborative workflows. The digital competency gap extends beyond mere technical ability to operate software; it encompasses broader digital literacy, including the capacity to understand digital logic, analyze data, and integrate technology into daily work processes. As noted by David Asadi, S.E., Head of the Organizational Affairs Division at the Regional Secretariat, in an interview on February 15, 2024:

*“...Our biggest challenge is aligning perceptions and work standards across OPDs. Some are already advanced in digitalization, while others still operate manually. Some are used to collaborative work, while others remain isolated. We’re addressing this through continuous mentoring and SOP harmonization programs...”*

This statement highlights that collaboration challenges are not merely technical but deeply rooted in cultural and paradigmatic dimensions. Differences in organizational maturity levels across OPDs generate significant heterogeneity in readiness to adopt more agile and collaborative work modes. The ongoing mentoring and SOP harmonization initiatives are appropriate interventions; however, cultural change is inherently gradual, requiring persistence and consistency in implementation.

Such disparities often create bottlenecks in workflow processes, particularly in multi sectoral development programs requiring complex cross-domain coordination. These bottlenecks typically occur at handover points where the output of one unit becomes the input of another. When the two operate with different systems, paces, and standards, these transitions become friction points that slow down overall progress. In some cases, such bottlenecks may even cause program delays or deviations from the original plan, resulting in resource inefficiencies and loss of implementation momentum.

A persistent challenge lies in the presence of sectoral ego within some OPDs, which inhibits genuine trust building and collaboration. This reflects a form of organizational territoriality, where each unit tends to protect its domain, authority, and resources from external influence or sharing. Such behavior is often reinforced by unit-based incentive systems rather than outcome-based performance systems, leading OPDs to prioritize their individual achievements over collective cross-sector outcomes. The compartmentalized budgeting structure further exacerbates this tendency, as each OPD competes to maximize its own allocations without considering optimal resource distribution at the regency level.

Despite these challenges, field findings indicate that leadership commitment at the regency level to strengthen coordination has been increasing driven by both national bureaucratic reform mandates and internal recognition of the importance of agility and service effectiveness. This leadership commitment is demonstrated not merely through policy rhetoric but also through tangible resource allocations for capacity-building programs, technological infrastructure development, and the establishment of more effective coordination mechanisms. The political will of local leadership acts as a critical enabling factor; without top management support, technical-level reforms would face resistance and lack the authority needed for cross-unit interventions.

Several OPDs have even established cross functional teams for strategic programs that operate under unified command and purpose, transcending traditional structural boundaries. The formation of these teams represents a significant structural innovation within Indonesia’s bureaucratic context, which remains predominantly rigid and hierarchical. Operating within a matrix structure, members maintain dual reporting lines to their home units and to the cross functional team coordinator creating temporary yet flexible systems focused on achieving specific objectives without being constrained by routine bureaucratic procedures.

These cross functional teams also function as mechanisms for cross pollination of ideas, synthesizing knowledge and expertise from diverse domains to produce holistic and comprehensive solutions. Team members learn from each other's perspectives, approaches, and limitations, fostering mutual understanding that serves as a foundation for long-term collaboration even beyond the team's dissolution. Participation in these teams also provides valuable leadership development opportunities, as members learn to operate in ambiguous contexts, manage conflicts, and negotiate with stakeholders holding different priorities. As Dr. Moh. Nalikan, M.M., Regional Secretary of Lamongan Regency, further noted in the same interview:

*"...We established special teams for priority programs such as poverty alleviation and infrastructure development. These teams consist of members from multiple OPDs, work intensively, and report directly to me. The results have been highly effective..."*

This testimony confirms the effectiveness of cross-functional team approaches in addressing complex issues requiring multi-domain integration. Direct accountability to top leadership provides these teams with the authority and resources necessary for effective coordination and strategic decision-making, without the delays inherent in bureaucratic hierarchies. The model also fosters a sense of urgency and shared purpose that enhances team motivation and commitment to deliver tangible results. The success of these teams represents a potential best practice that can be replicated in other priority programs, gradually transforming the overall governance model of Lamongan Regency into a more agile, collaborative, and performance-driven system.

### **c. The Role of Human Resource Capacity and Technology in Supporting Governance Agility**

The successful implementation of agile governance is largely determined by the capacity of human resources to understand the complexity of contemporary development dynamics and to manage change effectively and sustainably. In Lamongan Regency, systematic efforts to enhance the capacity of government officials have been continuously pursued through a range of training programs both technical and mindset-oriented combined with improved work discipline via a more measurable reward and punishment system, as well as the introduction and internalization of information technology as a strategic enabler in the planning, implementation, and evaluation of development programs.

These capacity building initiatives are not solely focused on hard skills such as application operation or data analysis, but also on soft skills including collaboration, effective communication, problem solving, and adaptability to change. The importance of soft skill development cannot be overlooked, as in the context of agile governance, civil servants' ability to work in cross sectoral teams, communicate transparently with stakeholders, and respond swiftly to feedback is crucial. The conducted training programs include design thinking workshops to foster innovation, emotional intelligence training to strengthen leadership capacity, and simulation-based training designed to replicate crisis situations and decision-making under uncertainty. According to Sujarwo, S.T., M.M., in an interview on February 5, 2024:

*“...Human resources are the key. Advanced technology is useless if those who operate it are not competent. We regularly conduct training, not only technical but also mindset-oriented. Civil servants must think solution-oriented, innovative, and be brave enough to make decisions...”*

This holistic human resource development approach is essential because agile governance requires personnel who are not only technically competent but also possess mental agility the ability to adapt quickly to dynamic and often unpredictable situations. The concept of mental agility encompasses the ability to think flexibly, shift strategies when necessary, learn rapidly from failures, and maintain a growth mindset that views challenges as opportunities for learning. In practice, mental agility is fostered through an organizational culture that encourages experimentation, constructive tolerance for failure, and recognition of initiatives and innovations emerging from lower administrative levels.

Furthermore, HR capacity development in Lamongan Regency integrates mentoring and coaching approaches, in which senior officials who have successfully adopted an agile mindset serve as mentors for their peers. Peer learning programs and communities of practice have been established to facilitate knowledge and experience sharing across government units, thereby creating a sustainable learning ecosystem. Initiatives such as internal “innovation labs” and “hackathons” have also been introduced to encourage civil servants to think creatively in solving public service challenges through unconventional approaches.

Nevertheless, several substantial barriers persist, such as a significant digital literacy gap between senior and junior generations, individual resistance to change rooted in comfort zones and fears of inadequacy, and a limited understanding of the philosophy and principles of agile, which are often perceived as foreign and overly complex. These issues continue to emerge during implementation, slowing the pace of transformation.

The digital literacy gap affects not only operational skills in technology use but also the strategic understanding of how technology can enhance efficiency and effectiveness. Senior officials often feel burdened by expectations to master multiple digital platforms in a short period, with insufficient contextual support tailored to their learning pace. Meanwhile, younger, more digitally native employees sometimes lack deep understanding of established bureaucratic procedures and policy frameworks, making their proposed technological solutions not always feasible or aligned with existing regulations. David Asadi, S.E., stated in an interview on February 15, 2024:

*“...There is indeed resistance, especially from senior employees accustomed to old ways of working. They feel uncomfortable with change, afraid of not being able to keep up with new technologies. We understand this, which is why our approach is persuasive and gradual, not coercive...”*

Resistance to change is a natural phenomenon in any organizational transformation but requires sensitive and structured handling. The persuasive approach involves intensive communication about the benefits of change, active participation of civil servants in the design of transformation processes to instill a sense of ownership, and the provision of both technical and emotional support

during the transition period. The implementation of a buddy system, in which junior staff assist senior colleagues in technology learning, has proven effective in reducing anxiety and increasing confidence. Moreover, testimonials and success stories from employees who have successfully transformed serve as tangible evidence and inspiration that change is both possible and beneficial.

It is also important to acknowledge that resistance is not always negative. In some cases, the skepticism of senior staff can function as a quality control mechanism, ensuring that innovations are mature and risk-aware before implementation. Constructive dialogue between change champions and skeptics can yield more robust and sustainable solutions.

The unequal utilization of available technology across government units remains another issue, driven by inadequate infrastructure, limited budgets for system acquisition and maintenance, and the absence of change agents to champion transformation within each unit. This infrastructure disparity has created a digital divide, widening the capacity gap between government units (OPD). Units located in urban areas with stable internet access and more tech-savvy personnel experience faster transformation, while those in remote or lower priority areas lag behind. Budget limitations affect not only hardware and software procurement but also critical areas such as cybersecurity, backup systems, and technical support. Some units are compelled to use obsolete or poorly integrated systems, leading to inefficiencies and data loss risks.

The absence of change agents within some units poses a major obstacle since agile transformation requires individuals who can inspire, facilitate, and consistently drive change. Effective change agents are not only technically knowledgeable but also possess interpersonal skills, peer credibility, and leadership support. Without such figures, change initiatives often lose momentum and revert to the status quo after initial enthusiasm fades. As noted by Sugeng Widodo, S.Sos., M.M., in an interview on February 8, 2024:

*“...Technology infrastructure is indeed uneven. Some units have advanced systems, others are still lacking. We are currently developing a digital roadmap to ensure all units meet a minimum IT infrastructure standard within the next 2–3 years...”*

The formulation of a digital roadmap is a strategic step to ensure that technological infrastructure development proceeds in a planned, phased, and sustainable manner. The roadmap encompasses not only technical specifications for required hardware and software but also realistic implementation timelines, clear funding schemes, integrated capacity building strategies, and monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to ensure milestone achievement. Scalability and interoperability must also be considered to avoid future bottlenecks as organizational needs evolve.

The digital roadmap also identifies quick wins technological implementations that are relatively simple and inexpensive but generate significant impact executed in the short term to build momentum and confidence in digital transformation. Examples include digitalizing frequently used service forms, implementing simple e-filing systems for document management, or adopting collaborative applications to reduce physical meetings and enhance coordination efficiency.

These conditions have resulted in uneven quality and pace of agile governance implementation, creating a gap between more advanced and less developed units. This disparity complicates coordination and collaboration across departments, especially for multi-stakeholder programs. When one department operates through integrated digital systems while another remains manual, coordination becomes cumbersome and prone to bottlenecks. Moreover, this disparity can affect morale employees in under resourced units may feel left behind or undervalued, reducing engagement and commitment to transformation.

To address these gaps, several strategies can be adopted, such as implementing a cluster system where advanced units mentor less developed ones, applying shared services for certain functions so that under resourced units can utilize existing infrastructure, and allocating budgets progressively to prioritize lagging departments.

Overall, there has been significant progress in the adoption of digital technologies as enablers of regional development acceleration, evidenced by the increased use of management information systems, mobile applications for public services, and real time monitoring dashboards that visualize performance metrics in user-friendly formats. Integrated information systems facilitate smoother data flow, reduce duplication, and enhance data accuracy for decision making. Mobile public service applications improve citizen access and transparency, ultimately boosting satisfaction and public trust.

Real time monitoring dashboards enable leaders to promptly identify problems or deviations from targets, allowing timely corrective action. Data visualizations in the form of charts, graphs, and color coded indicators simplify complex information, facilitating data driven discussions during coordination and evaluation meetings. Some units have even developed dashboards that integrate external data such as citizen feedback from social media or online surveys, providing a more holistic picture of performance and program impact.

In addition, the adoption of technologies such as e-procurement systems has improved transparency and efficiency in goods and services procurement, reducing corruption risks and price mark-ups. The use of e-budgeting systems has enabled more participatory and accountable budget planning by involving diverse stakeholders in proposal and prioritization processes. e-performance management systems promote a performance-oriented culture by delivering more regular and objective feedback to employees regarding their achievements.

Looking forward, the integration of emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence for predictive analytics, the Internet of Things for automated infrastructure monitoring, and blockchain for data integrity and security presents promising opportunities to strengthen agile governance capacity in Lamongan Regency. However, such adoptions must be approached prudently, taking into account human resource readiness, organizational needs, and clear cost-benefit considerations to avoid technology for technology's sake initiatives that add complexity without substantial value.

#### **d. The Contribution of Agile Governance to Regional Development Acceleration**

Field findings indicate that agile governance makes a tangible and measurable contribution to accelerating regional development in Lamongan Regency. This can be identified through several fundamental aspects, as elaborated below.

#### a) Policy Process Acceleration

A more flexible, responsive, and coordinated working model has significantly expedited and improved the accuracy of policy formulation, particularly for priority regional development programs that require immediate responses. Previously, the process from problem identification to policy enactment could take several months due to multi-layered bureaucratic procedures. However, through the agile approach, policies can now be formulated within weeks, or even days, in urgent cases.

This acceleration has been made possible through several concrete mechanisms implemented in Lamongan Regency. First, the establishment of cross departmental task forces or special teams empowered to make rapid decisions without passing through lengthy hierarchical channels for issues designated as strategic priorities. Second, the adoption of a digital approval system, which allows multi-level authorizations to occur simultaneously or in parallel unlike the sequential manual system that is time consuming. Third, the utilization of a war room or command center to enable real time coordination during crisis situations or high priority programs, where all key stakeholders physically or virtually convene to make data driven decisions promptly. A concrete example was provided by Drs. Poedjijanto, M.M., in an interview on February 10, 2024:

*“...For instance, in the road repair program following natural disasters, the process used to take two to three months from reporting to execution. Now, through rapid inter-departmental coordination and the digital approval system, it can be completed within two to three weeks. This has been a tremendous help for the community...”*

The iterative mechanism inherent in agile governance allows policies to be tested initially on a small scale (pilot projects), evaluated, and refined before wider implementation. This minimizes the risk of large-scale program failures that could be costly. The pilot project approach offers several strategic advantages: (1) it facilitates learning by doing, where lessons from small scale implementation are immediately applied for improvement before scaling up; (2) it reduces resistance to change, as stakeholders can observe concrete evidence of program success before full adoption; and (3) it optimizes budget allocation since major investments are made only after the concept and feasibility have been validated in the field.

The acceleration of policy processes is further reinforced by the more intensive use of evidence based policymaking, where data and analysis serve as the primary basis for decision-making, replacing intuition or political considerations. Real-time data dashboards, rapid surveys, and predictive analytics based on historical data enable policymakers to comprehend problems more comprehensively and formulate more targeted and effective solutions. Moreover, more efficient public consultation mechanisms through digital platforms allow community input to be gathered and analyzed faster, resulting in policies that are both more legitimate and socially acceptable.

#### b) Program Implementation Efficiency

The integration of digital systems and adaptive work patterns has enabled regional government agencies (Organisasi Perangkat Daerah or OPD) to adjust

programs in real time based on field dynamics and community feedback, without the need for time-consuming formal revisions. The implementation of an integrated digital monitoring system facilitates early detection of deviations or issues in program implementation, allowing corrective actions to be taken promptly before problems escalate.

Program efficiency in this context is not solely a matter of speed, but also of optimizing the utilization of limited resources. Given the inherent fiscal constraints of regional budgets, the capacity to identify inefficiencies, discontinue ineffective programs, and reallocate resources toward initiatives with greater impact becomes critically important. The agile approach, supported by a system of continuous monitoring and evaluation, enables these actions to be carried out systematically and in a data driven manner. As explained by Sujarwo, S.T., M.M., during an interview on February 5, 2024:

*"...We update our monitoring dashboard daily. So, if there is a program whose realization slows down or encounters obstacles, we can immediately identify it and take action. There is no need to wait for monthly reports as we did before..."*

Increased budget and resource reallocation flexibility among programs has further enhanced the optimization of resources in accordance with actual priorities and on the ground urgency. In practice, this budget flexibility mechanism is governed by policies that allow for budget adjustments within certain thresholds without undergoing the lengthy and complex process of revising the regional budget (APBD). For instance, in programs designated as adaptive priorities, department heads are authorized to reallocate a certain percentage of the total program budget based on field developments and emerging needs, as long as such reallocations remain within the established output and outcome frameworks.

Efficiency gains are also achieved through the elimination or simplification of non value adding activities. Through process mapping and value stream analysis, several OPDs have identified procedural stages that constitute waste such as redundant verification, unnecessary waiting times, or repetitive approvals and have subsequently eliminated or simplified these steps. The outcomes of such process improvements not only accelerate program delivery but also enhance employee satisfaction, as civil servants can focus on meaningful tasks rather than unproductive administrative burdens.

Moreover, the use of automation technologies for repetitive and rule based tasks contributes significantly to operational efficiency. Examples include automatic notification systems that alert program managers when specific milestones are due or deviations occur, automated report generation systems that compile data from multiple sources into standardized reports, and chatbots designed to respond to routine public inquiries allowing staff to focus on more complex cases requiring human judgment.

### c) Strengthening Public Services

The citizen centric principle in agile governance transforms public service delivery to become more responsive, personalized, and satisfactory for the public. Citizens directly experience that information regarding various governmental services and programs has become more accessible through

multiple digital channels. Several administrative procedures have been streamlined from previously requiring 10–15 steps to only 3–5 steps while waiting times have been drastically reduced.

This enhancement in public service delivery represents the most visible manifestation of agile governance implementation, as it is tangibly felt by citizens in their daily interactions with government institutions. The transformation of public services is not merely about digitalization; it signifies a fundamental rethinking of service design, prioritizing user experience above bureaucratic convenience. The adoption of design thinking which involves citizens throughout the service design process via user research, prototyping, and user testing ensures that services are genuinely aligned with users' needs and expectations rather than based solely on bureaucratic assumptions. Sugiono, a resident of Lamongan District, shared his experience during an interview on February 18, 2024:

*"...Previously, applying for a business permit was complicated—I had to visit the office multiple times and wait in long queues. Now, I can apply online, upload the required documents, and receive approval within a few days. It's much easier and faster..."*

The implementation of omnichannel service delivery enables citizens to access public services through multiple touchpoints online via websites or mobile applications, and offline via service offices or field officers while maintaining a seamless and integrated user experience. Data and service progress are synchronized across channels, allowing citizens to start an application on one channel and continue it on another without restarting the process. This flexibility is essential, given the digital divide that persists in society, as not all citizens have equal access to or capability in using digital services. Drs. Suratji, a resident of Babat District, noted in an interview on February 20, 2024:

*"...I once filed a complaint about a damaged road using the 'Lapor Bupati' application. Within a week, there was already follow-up action from the relevant agency. This shows that the government is now more responsive..."*

An improved feedback mechanism also allows citizens to submit complaints or suggestions that are directly followed up by relevant government departments, fostering a sense of ownership and active participation in public service processes. This feedback system serves not merely as complaint management but as a valuable source of insight for continuous improvement. Each feedback item is analyzed to identify problem patterns, root causes, and opportunities for enhancement. Agencies with a mature agile implementation even conduct proactive outreach to solicit feedback from service users, rather than waiting for complaints to arise.

Personalized service delivery has also begun to take shape, whereby systems can provide relevant service recommendations based on citizens' profiles and interaction histories with the government. For instance, when a citizen registers a newborn, the system proactively informs them about available assistance programs or child related services, procedures for

obtaining a birth certificate and related documents, and the immunization schedule. This proactive and personalized approach increases public awareness of their rights and the services available to them. Anita Haapsari, a resident of Kedungpring District, expressed her appreciation in an interview on February 22, 2024:

*"...Information about social assistance programs is now more transparent and accessible online. We can see who receives the aid and how much the budget is. This is great for preventing fraud..."*

The improvement in service quality is also reflected in the implementation of clear and tightly monitored Service Level Agreements (SLA). Each service type has a published completion time standard, and compliance with these SLAs is monitored and incorporated into the performance evaluation of government departments. The transparency of SLAs enhances predictability for citizens and accountability for government institutions. Some agencies even offer compensation or additional conveniences if SLAs are not met, demonstrating a genuine commitment to service quality.

#### d) Enhanced Transparency and Accountability

The accelerated and comprehensive processes of digitalization and monitoring have significantly enhanced public information disclosure, forming an integral part of the principles of good governance and the democratization of development. Public dashboards that display development progress, budget realization, and performance indicators enable citizens to independently conduct social auditing.

In the context of agile governance, transparency is not merely about information disclosure, but also about the accessibility and comprehensibility of such information. Publicized data must be easily accessible, presented in a user-friendly format, and visualized in a way that facilitates understanding, even for the general public. A well designed public dashboard does not merely display raw figures but also provides context, trends, comparisons with targets or previous periods, and narrative explanations that assist interpretation. As emphasized by Dr. Moh. Nalikan, M.M., during an interview on February 12, 2024:

*"...Transparency is our commitment. The public has the right to know how their tax money is used for development. That is why we provide a digital platform accessible to everyone to monitor development progress..."*

The digital footprints recorded within the system also facilitate both internal and external audit processes, thereby enhancing bureaucratic accountability and reducing opportunities for non transparent practices. This digital trail creates an automatic checks and balances system, where every transaction, decision, or action is logged with timestamps and user identification, making them traceable and verifiable. The immutability of certain log records particularly those related to financial transactions ensures that historical data cannot be retroactively manipulated.

The implementation of e-procurement, for instance, not only accelerates the procurement process but also enhances transparency and fair competition,

as all vendors have equal access to tender information. The evaluation process is carried out using predetermined objective criteria, and the results are publicly disclosed. This system reduces the likelihood of collusion and nepotism, which are often prevalent in closed, manual procurement systems. Sukandar, a resident of Deket District, expressed positive feedback during an interview on February 25, 2024:

*"...Now we can monitor our village's development ourselves through the regency's website. Transparency has improved, and public trust in the government has also increased...."*

Accountability has also been reinforced through a more robust performance management mechanism. Each government agency and program now has clearly defined, measurable, and publicly available Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). Progress toward these KPIs is periodically monitored and published. This system fosters peer pressure and a healthy competitive spirit among agencies to meet or exceed their targets. Regular public accountability sessions, where agency leaders present achievements and respond to public inquiries, have begun to be institutionalized establishing a direct accountability mechanism to constituents.

Moreover, transparency in development data provides opportunities for third parties such as academics, the media, and civil society organizations to conduct independent analyses and offer constructive feedback or criticism on government policies and programs. This constructive dialogue between the government and external stakeholders enriches perspectives in policy making and enhances the quality of resulting policies.

In conclusion, agile governance demonstrates a strong and positive correlation with the acceleration of regional development, in terms of speed, quality, and impact. Although it has not yet been fully implemented across all governmental levels, the governance trajectory of Lamongan Regency shows substantial potential to evolve into a region characterized by an agile, modern bureaucracy focused on delivering high-quality public services.

#### e) Implementation Challenges and Improvement Efforts

An in depth analysis based on field findings identifies several critical barriers that hinder the optimal implementation of agile governance. These challenges can be categorized into four major aspects:

##### 1. Hierarchical and Formalistic Bureaucratic Culture

Barrier lies in the persistence of a hierarchical and formalistic bureaucratic culture, where decision-making processes remain inflexible and bound to lengthy structural chains. The prevailing wait and see attitude and the fear of taking risks continue to dominate, leading public officials to prefer playing it safe rather than taking initiative or innovating. This hierarchical culture is a legacy of the Weberian bureaucratic model, which has been deeply entrenched for decades and is difficult to transform in a short period. Within this system, authority and decision making power are concentrated at the top levels, while lower levels function merely as executors with limited room for initiative. Such a command and control style of management may work effectively in stable and predictable environments, but it becomes a

bottleneck in volatile and complex contexts that demand quick decision-making at the frontline.

The formalistic culture that prioritizes procedural compliance over substantive results also undermines agility. Civil servants often focus on ensuring that all forms are properly filled out, signatures collected, and procedures rigidly followed rather than ensuring that outputs truly solve problems or meet citizens' needs. In some cases, strict adherence to procedures even becomes an excuse for inaction or delayed action, despite urgent situations requiring immediate response. As acknowledged by David Asadi, S.E., during an interview on February 15, 2024:

*"...Hierarchical culture remains strong in some departments. Subordinates are reluctant to make decisions without their superiors' approval, even for technical matters that could actually be decided at the operational level. This is what we are gradually trying to change...."*

## 2. Uneven Human Resource Capacity

Barrier concerns the uneven capacity of human resources, particularly in relation to digitalization and collaborative working methods. This creates performance disparities both across departments (OPD) and among individuals within the organization. This capacity gap extends beyond technical skills in operating digital tools; it also involves a lack of conceptual understanding of the agile work paradigm. Many officials can use certain applications but do not understand why they are used, how the data they input contributes to decision-making, or how their tasks relate to broader organizational outcomes. This lack of big-picture understanding results in mechanical work behavior devoid of a sense of purpose or ownership.

Cross functional and inter departmental collaboration also remains a significant challenge. In traditional, siloed organizations, civil servants are accustomed to working within their own unit boundaries with minimal interaction with others. When agile governance requires cross functional teamwork and joint problem solving, many feel uncomfortable or unsure how to contribute effectively in diverse, interdisciplinary teams. As noted by Sugeng Widodo, S.Sos., M.M., during an interview on February 8, 2024:

*"...The digital competency gap is still quite large. Some employees are proficient in using various applications, while others still struggle with basic functions. Training continues, but equalizing capability takes time..."*

## 3. Lack of Data Integration Across Departments

Challenge lies in the insufficient integration of data among departments (OPDs), resulting in fragmented datasets stored across incompatible systems. This fragmentation disrupts planning, monitoring, and evaluation processes that rely on comprehensive, cross sectoral data. Such fragmentation stems from piecemeal and uncoordinated development of information systems. Each department tends to develop or adopt systems based on its specific needs, without considering interoperability with systems used by other departments. Consequently, data that could have been

integrated and cross-referenced for richer insights remain isolated within separate silos.

The lack of data standardization further exacerbates the issue. Different departments may employ distinct definitions, formats, or coding schemes for the same concepts, complicating data aggregation and comparison even when technical integration is feasible. For instance, the definition of “poor households” used by the social services department may differ from that used by the health department, rendering poverty data between the two incompatible.

Issues such as incomplete entries, duplicate records, or outdated information are also prevalent, especially in systems with inadequate maintenance. When data quality is not assured, stakeholders become reluctant to rely on such data for decision-making, reverting instead to intuition-based or politically driven decisions. As explained by Drs. Poedjijanto, M.M., during an interview on February 10, 2024:

*“...Data integration remains one of our major challenges. Each department still maintains its own system that cannot communicate with others. We are currently developing an integrated system that can consolidate all data from various departments...”*

#### 4. Resistance to Change

Barrier involves both individual and organizational-level resistance to change, triggered by concerns over potential loss of position, lack of understanding of change benefits, or simply organizational inertia rooted in long standing routines. Resistance manifests in various forms from passive resistance such as delayed compliance, minimal effort, or superficial support for change initiatives, to active resistance such as openly questioning or undermining reform efforts. At the unit level, it may appear as turf protection, reluctance to share resources, or bureaucratic obstacles that delay the implementation of cross departmental initiatives.

The fear of the unknown serves as a major psychological driver of resistance. Transitioning to agile governance introduces uncertainties regarding organizational structures, job redefinitions, new performance evaluation criteria, and even the future relevance of certain positions. In such uncertain contexts, the natural human reaction is to cling to the familiar and resist the unfamiliar. A perceived loss of power or status also contributes to resistance, particularly among middle managers who feel that empowerment and flatter structures in agile approaches diminish their authority and influence. In traditional hierarchies, middle managers hold gatekeeping power because information and decisions flow through them; however, in a transparent and decentralized agile system, such power becomes significantly reduced.

#### **Systematic and Sustainable Improvement Efforts**

Systematic and sustainable improvement efforts to strengthen agile governance can be undertaken through several strategic initiatives:

**The first** step is to promote an adaptive culture through internal campaigns, leadership role modeling, and a reward system that recognizes

initiative and innovation. Cultural transformation requires a multi-pronged approach that touches various dimensions of the organization. Internal campaigns should be carried out consistently and through multiple channels from town halls, internal newsletters, and posters to digital platforms to communicate the vision, values, and expected behaviors of an agile culture. The messaging must be clear, concrete, and relatable, rather than abstract slogans.

Leadership role modeling is particularly critical, as people observe what leaders do, not just what they say. When leaders demonstrate behaviors aligned with agile values such as being transparent about challenges, admitting mistakes and learning from them, seeking input from frontline employees, or making timely decisions despite incomplete information it sends a powerful signal that such behaviors are legitimate and rewarded. Conversely, when leaders' actions contradict their stated values, cynicism arises and change initiatives are undermined. As Dr. Moh. Nalikan, M.M. emphasized during an interview on February 12, 2024:

*"...We are designing a reward system for departments and individuals who demonstrate innovative and responsive performance. This aims to foster a more agile work culture throughout the government..."*

The reward system must be designed to reinforce desired behaviors, not merely provide financial incentives. Recognition, career advancement opportunities, greater autonomy, and participation in high-visibility projects can serve as effective motivators. The key is consistency between what is rewarded and what is espoused as organizational values. If innovation is claimed as a core value, but promotions go to those who simply follow orders, the resulting mixed messages will hinder behavioral change.

Creating safe spaces for experimentation is also essential. Officials must feel safe to try new approaches without fear of punishment if experiments fail, provided the process is conducted with due diligence and lessons are extracted from failure. The "fail fast, learn fast" principle should be internalized, positioning failure not as stigma but as an integral component of the innovation process.

**The second** initiative is to provide comprehensive and continuous training on digital technologies and agile mindsets not as one off sessions but as continuous learning programs tailored to the specific needs of each department. Training programs should be developed using sound instructional design principles that reflect adult learning theories such as relevance, practical application, and experiential learning. Overly theoretical or generic training, detached from day to day work contexts, is quickly forgotten and fails to influence behavior. As Sujarwo, S.T., M.M. noted during an interview on February 5, 2024:

*"...Our training programs are structured in tiers, from basic to advanced levels. Each employee has a learning path aligned with their current competencies and the target competencies to be achieved..."*

A blended learning approach combining classroom sessions, online modules, on the job training, coaching, and peer learning can be more effective than relying on a single training modality. A Learning Management System (LMS) can be utilized to track individual progress, offer personalized learning recommendations, and ensure that training investments translate into measurable competency improvements. Communities of practice where practitioners facing similar challenges can share experiences, insights, and solutions represent a powerful yet often underutilized learning mechanism. Facilitating such communities, whether within a single department or across multiple ones, accelerates knowledge diffusion and fosters collective problem solving.

**The third** effort involves perfecting an integrated digital platform at the regency level that consolidates data and systems from various departments, ensuring interoperability, security, and optimal user experience. The development of this integrated platform should adhere to enterprise architecture best practices, where interoperability is achieved through standardized data models, well defined APIs, and consistent messaging protocols. Adopting service oriented architecture (SOA) or microservices provides the flexibility to update or replace individual systems without disrupting the entire ecosystem.

A clear data governance framework must define data ownership, quality standards, access rights, and lifecycle management. Master Data Management (MDM) for key entities such as citizens, regions, and organizations ensures that reference data used across systems remain consistent and accurate. Cybersecurity considerations are paramount, given the sensitivity of government data and the potential impact of breaches. The implementation of best practices encryption, access control, audit logging, and regular security assessments should be rigorous. Moreover, business continuity and disaster recovery plans are essential to ensure uninterrupted services during disruptive events.

User experience (UX) design must not be overlooked. A technically sophisticated but difficult-to-use system will face low adoption. Engaging actual users through user research, usability testing, and iterative refinement ensures that systems are genuinely user friendly and responsive to user needs.

**The fourth** initiative is to establish cross-departmental teams dedicated to strategic development programs, operating under agile principles such as daily stand-ups, sprint planning, and retrospective meetings. These cross functional teams bring together diverse expertise and perspectives essential for addressing complex, multi-dimensional challenges that cannot be solved by a single department working in isolation. Team composition must be carefully designed to ensure an optimal mix of skills, clearly defined roles and responsibilities, and adequate empowerment to make decisions within their scope.

Agile ceremonies facilitate coordination and continuous improvement: daily stand-ups promote synchronization and rapid issue resolution; sprint planning structures work into manageable tasks with clear goals and deliverables; and retrospective meetings allow teams to reflect on successes, challenges, and lessons for the next sprint. Physical or virtual co

location of cross-functional teams enhances collaboration through informal interactions and fast communication. Visual management tools such as Kanban boards make workflows transparent and progress visible to all members, fostering shared accountability and collective ownership of outcomes.

#### **f) Analysis of the Interconnection Between Agile Governance and Regional Development**

From both theoretical and empirical perspectives, this comprehensive discussion demonstrates that the implementation of agile governance exerts a significant and multidimensional influence on the acceleration of regional development not only in terms of speed but also in terms of quality and sustainability. Agile principles, which emphasize rapid adaptation to environmental changes, continuous iteration in program execution, intensive stakeholder collaboration, and a strong orientation toward citizens' needs and satisfaction, have proven to align closely with the demands of contemporary development acceleration, which requires precision, efficiency, and responsiveness to increasingly complex socioeconomic dynamics.

In the context of regional development characterized by budgetary constraints, rising public expectations, and increasingly interdependent challenges the agile approach offers a more suitable framework compared to traditional, rigid, and waterfall approaches. The traditional model assumes that requirements can be fully defined at the outset, that the environment is stable and predictable, and that implementation can proceed according to a fixed, detailed plan without adjustment. Such assumptions have become increasingly unrealistic in the VUCA (Volatility, Uncertainty, Complexity, Ambiguity) environment that defines contemporary development.

Agile governance provides organizations with the capability to sense and respond to change more rapidly and effectively. Sensing mechanisms such as real-time monitoring, citizen feedback systems, and environmental scanning enable organizations to detect weak signals or emerging issues before they escalate into crises. Response mechanisms such as rapid decision making protocols, flexible resource allocation, and modular program design allow organizations to act appropriately with minimal delay. As Dr. Moh. Nalikan, M.M. summarized during an interview on February 12, 2024:

*"...Agile governance is not just a trend it's a necessity. The world is changing so fast, and the government must be able to keep up. If we continue to use rigid, outdated methods, we will fall behind and the public will bear the consequences..."*

Agile governance not only accelerates administrative processes and shortens bureaucratic procedures but also fundamentally enhances the quality of both internal and external organizational interactions. It reduces structural barriers that traditionally serve as bottlenecks in program implementation and strengthens the capacity and resilience of local governments to navigate increasingly volatile and unpredictable social, economic, and technological environments. Improved internal interactions manifest through stronger collaboration, reduced silos, enhanced trust, and a shared sense of purpose among units and individuals within the organization.

When people work together more effectively, coordination costs decrease, decision quality improves as multiple perspectives are considered, and program execution becomes smoother due to unified understanding and alignment.

Interactions with external stakeholders also become more productive and mutually beneficial. The government is no longer perceived as a distant, unresponsive bureaucracy but as an accessible, responsive partner willing to listen and act. Trust built through consistent, positive interactions becomes a valuable form of social capital, essential for mobilizing collective action in addressing complex societal challenges. The reduction of structural barriers is realized through process simplification, the reduction of approval layers, the elimination of redundant controls, and the decentralization of decision-making authority. When unnecessary bureaucratic frictions are eliminated, the energy and resources previously expended on navigating bureaucracy can be redirected toward actual value creation.

Enhanced resilience manifests in the organizational ability to absorb shocks, adapt to new conditions, and recover quickly from disruptions. In facing crises such as pandemics, natural disasters, or economic downturns, local governments with agile governance can pivot resources, redesign programs, or implement emergency measures more swiftly and effectively, thereby minimizing adverse impacts on society. As Sujarwo, S.T., M.M. emphasized in an interview on February 5, 2024:

*"...What we are building is not only a system but also an adaptive organizational culture. Our greatest investment is in human resources capable of continuous learning and adaptation. This is what will ensure Lamongan's long-term sustainability..."*

Furthermore, agile governance fosters the development of a learning organization one that continuously learns from experience, adapts rapidly, and engages in continuous improvement. Such organizations are characterized by personal mastery where individuals continually expand their capabilities, a shared vision that aligns collective efforts, team learning that leverages collective intelligence, mental models that challenge assumptions and biases, and systems thinking that recognizes interdependencies and dynamic complexities.

In a learning organization, failures are not seen as something to conceal or punish, but as valuable learning opportunities. After-action reviews and lessons-learned sessions are conducted systematically to extract insights from both successes and failures. These insights are documented and disseminated, building an organizational memory that prevents the repetition of past mistakes.

Continuous improvement becomes embedded in the organizational way of working, rather than being treated as an occasional initiative. The accumulation of small, incremental improvements over time yields significant performance gains. A Kaizen mindset where everyone, from top management to frontline staff, constantly seeks ways to improve processes fosters a culture of excellence. Public perspectives also affirm these findings, as expressed by Sugiono during an interview on February 18, 2024:

*"...We can see real changes. The government is now more responsive, more transparent, and more attentive to citizens' feedback. This makes us more optimistic about the future of regional development..."*

Such public optimism represents an intangible but valuable asset a form of social capital that fosters civic engagement and collective action. When citizens trust their government and believe that their participation matters, they are more willing to contribute whether by paying taxes, complying with regulations, volunteering, or providing policy input.

Positive public sentiment also facilitates governance, as policies and programs are more easily implemented with reduced resistance. Conversely, when trust is low and cynicism is high, even well-intentioned policies may encounter strong opposition simply because people doubt the government's integrity or capability. Therefore, considering all dimensions of the analysis above, it can be concluded with a high degree of confidence that agile governance serves as a strategic and foundational approach for accelerating regional development in Lamongan Regency. However, its implementation must be consistent, systematic, and supported by strong commitment across all levels of leadership within local government institutions.

Consistency is critical because transformation is a marathon, not a sprint. Results will not be immediate, and setbacks are inevitable along the way. Wavering leadership commitment or overly frequent shifts in priorities can derail transformation efforts that require sustained dedication over an extended period. A systematic approach ensures that transformation is conducted through proper planning, adequate resourcing, and effective change management rather than through ad-hoc or opportunistic initiatives lacking coherence. It also involves establishing clear metrics for measuring progress and mechanisms for course correction when outcomes deviate from expectations.

Finally, commitment across all leadership levels not only from top executives but also from middle managers and supervisors is essential. These are the individuals who translate strategic intent into operational reality and directly shape the daily behaviors of frontline staff. Alignment across leadership levels in both messaging and behavior is critical for creating a consistent experience and shared expectations throughout the organization.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

Based on the research findings concerning the implementation of agile governance in supporting regional development acceleration in Lamongan Regency, the following conclusions can be drawn: **First**, the implementation of agile governance in Lamongan Regency demonstrates a significant transformation from the traditional bureaucratic pattern towards a more adaptive and collaborative system. This shift is reflected in the intensified coordination mechanisms among Regional Government Agencies (OPD), the simplification of public service procedures, and the strategic adoption of digital technology to expedite administrative processes. **Second**, inter agency (cross OPD) collaboration exhibits positive progression, characterized by coordination forums that are more substantive and oriented towards concrete problem-solving. Nevertheless, persistent institutional barriers remain, including uneven data synchronization, disparities in Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) across OPDs, and residual sectoral egoism that inhibits optimal collaboration.

**Third**, the capacity of Human Resources (HR) and technological infrastructure are recognized as determinant factors for the success of agile governance; however, they still reveal disparities among organizational units. Gaps in digital literacy,

resistance to change, and non-uniform infrastructure result in an inconsistent quality of implementation across the board. **Fourth**, Agile governance contributes tangibly to development acceleration through: (a) expediting the policy process from months to weeks; (b) enhancing program execution efficiency via real-time monitoring; (c) strengthening more responsive public service delivery; and (d) increasing transparency and accountability, thereby reinforcing public trust. **Fifth**, a strong correlation exists between the implementation of agile governance and regional development acceleration. The principles of rapid adaptation, continuous iteration, intensive collaboration, and citizen-needs orientation are proven to align with the demands of contemporary development, which necessitate high speed, precision, and responsiveness.

## 5. ACKNOWLEDGE

Based on the preceding conclusions, the following recommendations are proposed to optimize the implementation of agile governance in Lamongan Regency:

### a. Strategic Recommendations

**Strengthening Leadership Commitment** Formalize agile governance as the primary framework for governmental administration, ensuring strong role modeling from the Regional Head and leaders of Regional Government Agencies (OPD) in areas such as rapid decision-making, openness to innovation, and the fundamental transformation of the bureaucratic mindset.

**Developing an Implementation Roadmap** Establish a comprehensive 3-5 year roadmap encompassing digital transformation, Human Resource development, regulatory reform, and intensified inter-OPD collaboration. This roadmap must include clear milestones, measurable indicators, and explicit accountability mechanisms.

**Regulatory and SOP Reform** Conduct a review and reform of rigid regulations and Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), focusing on procedural simplification, reduction of approval levels, and delegation of decision-making authority to the operational level for technical and operational matters.

### b. Operational Recommendations

**Human Resource Capacity Development Program** Design continuous capacity-building programs that include technical digital training, the development of soft skills (collaboration, problem-solving, change management), and the internalization of the agile mindset through personalized and adaptive learning pathways.

**Building an Integrated Digital Ecosystem** Accelerate the development of integrated systems, comprising: (a) a Government Resource Planning system; (b) a central data warehouse for the regency to serve as the single source of truth; and (c) real-time analytical dashboards, while meticulously addressing interoperability, security, and user experience.

**Strengthening Inter OPD Collaboration** Institutionalize cross-functional teams for strategic programs, implement digital collaboration platforms, conduct solution-oriented coordination forums, and develop a dedicated reward system for effective collaboration.

### c. Public Engagement Recommendations

**Enhancing Digital Literacy and Participation** Develop public education programs on digital services, provide access and assistance at the sub-

district/village level, strengthen responsive feedback mechanisms, and establish digital participation platforms for development planning and monitoring.

Strengthening Technology-Based Transparency Develop a comprehensive transparency portal featuring real-time program information, a secure whistleblowing system, regular public hearings using a hybrid technology approach, and the publication of performance reports that are accessible and engaging.

#### **d. Monitoring and Evaluation Recommendations**

Implementing Agile Performance Management Transform the current performance management system through the adoption of OKRs (Objectives and Key Results), a continuous feedback mechanism, integrated performance dashboards, and regular retrospective meetings for continuous improvement.

Developing a Learning Organization Establish systematic organizational learning mechanisms by: (a) documenting and codifying best practices and lessons learned from innovative programs; (b) developing communities of practice for experience sharing among OPDs; (c) conducting periodic innovation challenges; and (d) engaging in benchmarking with other regions advanced in agile governance for contextual adaptation.

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