

# Institutional Design In Collaborative Governance In Childhood Prevention Program In Central Mamuju District

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**Abstract:** Child marriage is a multidimensional problem that is still rampant in Indonesia, including in Central Mamuju Regency which has a high prevalence rate. This study aims to analyze institutional design within the framework of Collaborative Governance in the child marriage prevention program in Central Mamuju. The study uses a qualitative descriptive approach with a case study strategy. Data were obtained through in-depth interviews, observations, documentation, and FGDs with various stakeholders, and analyzed using the Miles and Huberman interactive model. The focus of the study was directed at institutional design elements including inclusive participation, exclusive forums, basic rules, and transparency processes. The results of the study indicate that the collaborative structure in Central Mamuju has accommodated participatory principles by involving various parties such as local governments, villages, sub-districts, health sectors, education, and civil society. Basic regulations and collaborative forums have also been implemented transparently and formally through MoUs and national and regional regulations. However, the active involvement of vertical institutions such as the Ministry of Religion still needs to be strengthened so that collaboration runs more effectively and sustainably. This study concludes that inclusive and transparent institutional design is an important foundation in strengthening collaborative governance to significantly reduce child marriage rates in the region.

**Keywords:** Institutional Design, Collaborative Governance, Child Marriage.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Child marriage remains a serious problem in Indonesia, especially in areas with high poverty rates and deep-rooted local cultures. Although data from the Central Statistics Agency (2021) shows a downward trend in the number of child marriages from 10.82% in 2019 to 10.18% in 2020, this practice is still widespread. In fact, according to UNICEF (2022), Indonesia ranks 7th in the world for child marriage cases, with around 1.5 million cases, and is the second highest in Southeast Asia. This condition becomes even more worrying when throughout 2022, religious courts recorded more than 55,000 requests for child marriage dispensation. This phenomenon is also reflected locally in Central Mamuju Regency, West Sulawesi—the province with the highest prevalence of child marriage in Indonesia. In the last three years, the number of child marriages in the district has tended to stagnate, even increasing from 174 cases in 2021 to 185 cases in 2022. This condition indicates the weak effectiveness of the prevention programs implemented.

The problem of child marriage has social, cultural, economic, and even psychological dimensions. The public's view that child marriage is a solution to poverty, social pressure, or to maintain religious norms, is a challenge in itself. Unfortunately, the child marriage prevention program in Central Mamuju has not shown significant results. Several inhibiting factors include: the absence of specific regional regulations, weak political will, minimal budget allocation, and less than optimal cross-sector coordination in program implementation. In the context of current governance, problems such as child marriage cannot be solved by the government alone. The government requires active involvement from the private sector and civil society (Ndraha & Uang, 2022; Storeng & de Bengy Puyvallée, 2018).

This is what then places the Collaborative Governance approach as a strategic alternative in dealing with complex public problems (wicked problems). This approach emphasizes the importance of collaboration between government, non-government, and community actors in a structured forum to achieve common goals.

This study uses the Collaborative Governance theoretical framework from Ansell and Gash (2008), which emphasizes five important elements: initial conditions, institutional design, facilitative leadership, collaborative processes, and intermediate outcomes. Of the five elements, this study will specifically focus on institutional design as a crucial element that can ensure the collaborative process runs effectively and sustainably. Good institutional design will include an inclusive collaboration structure, mutually agreed rules, transparency mechanisms, and equal participation between actors (Bäckstrand et al., 2022; Christensen, 2024). In the context of the child marriage prevention program in Central Mamuju, the failure to establish a solid institutional design is suspected to be one of the main causes of the weak implementation of the program. Therefore, it is important to examine how the institutional design is designed and implemented, and to what extent it is in accordance with the principles of collaborative governance.

Through this research, it is hoped that a comprehensive understanding of the role of institutional design in supporting the success of cross-sector collaboration can be produced, as well as providing applicable policy recommendations for strengthening the governance of child marriage prevention programs in the regions.

## **2. METHOD**

This study uses a qualitative descriptive approach that aims to understand and explain the phenomenon in depth, especially in the context of Collaborative Governance in the Child Marriage Prevention Program in Central Mamuju Regency. Although qualitative, quantitative data is still possible as a complement. The research strategy used is a case study, appropriate to answer research questions that are "how" and "why". This study utilizes the pattern matching method to connect data with theoretical propositions, as well as describe the collaboration process in program implementation. The main focus of this study is on the management of cross-sector collaboration in preventing child marriage.

The research was conducted in Central Mamuju Regency, because this area has a fairly high rate of child marriage, even being part of the province with the highest rate of child marriage in Indonesia. The focus of the research covers six dimensions: (1) initial conditions of collaboration, (2) collaborative organizational design, (3) facilitative leadership, (4) collaboration process, (5) program impact, and (6) formulation of a collaboration model that is appropriate to local conditions. Data sources are divided into two: (1) primary data, obtained through in-depth interviews, observations, and FGDs with various informants such as service officials, village heads, married children, and parents; and (2) secondary data, in the form of official publication documents, activity reports, and statistical data from related agencies.

Data collection techniques include direct observation of the behavior of collaboration actors, in-depth interviews, documentation studies of written references, and focus group discussions (FGD) with stakeholders. In analyzing the data, the interactive analysis model from Miles and Huberman (2014) was used, which includes four stages: (1) data collection, (2) data condensation (reduction), (3) systematic data presentation, and (4) drawing conclusions and verifying data that continues continuously until saturation is reached. To maintain the validity of the data, triangulation of sources, methods, and theories was used. Source triangulation was carried out by comparing data from various informants; method triangulation through a combination of interviews, observations, and documentation; while theory triangulation was used to test the validity of data interpretation from various theoretical perspectives. Overall, this research method is designed to build a comprehensive understanding of the dynamics and effectiveness of cross-sector collaboration in preventing child marriage, while also developing a contextual and applicable Collaborative Governance model in Central Mamuju Regency.

## **3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS**

Institutional or organizational design is related to the existence of an organization or container that is formed as an arena for collaboration for stakeholders who collaborate.(Ansell & Gash, 2008). Where in the organization formed requires inclusive participation, exclusive forums, rules and transparency processes. Institutional design in

collaboration is very necessary to help encourage innovation, creativity, and productivity.

Institutional design refers to protocols and regulations on collaboration and has an important role for the legitimacy of procedures in collaboration (Ansell & Gash, 2008). Institutional design includes an explanation of who the actors will be involved in the collaboration. Institutional design is inclusive, when a collaboration forum has been formed, there are clear and transparent rules that become the legitimacy of the procedure, thus creating trust between the actors.

Collaboration will be effective if in its implementation every stakeholder can participate well and there are rules that serve as a reference in the implementation of the program. Collaboration can run effectively if competitive and institutional pressures significantly influence its formation and are sustainable in the long term. Institutional design includes elements of inclusive participation, exclusive forums, basic rules and transparency processes. Not only inclusive participation is needed in institutional design, basic rules are also needed in institutional design in collaboration. This shows that in implementing the program, it is important to understand the basic rules. Basic rules are the foundation for every stakeholder in running and implementing the program that has been set.

The research results regarding this element are described as follows:

### **1. Inclusive Participation and Exclusive Forums**

Participation in collaboration is essential to demonstrate the active involvement of stakeholders in the process, discussion or topic that will be achieved. Inclusive participation in an organization is when everyone can participate in activities and carry out the work of the organization, and be heard and considered in decision making. Participation in the implementation of a program can provide encouragement in the success of program achievement. Participation does not only involve stakeholders from the government, but community participation is also essential for the success of a program.

In an effort to prevent child marriage, the Central Mamuju Regency government always collaborates with various stakeholders. In implementing collaboration, of course, it is necessary not only for the participation of each stakeholder. But also the importance of inclusive deliberation so that in the implementation of the program there is no conflict between stakeholders due to the lack of agreement in decision making. The Village Community Empowerment Service also added that in preventing Child Marriage, it also collaborates with other stakeholders.

In the implementation of collaboration, each stakeholder has a role in participating in preventing child marriage in Central Mamuju Regency. By holding cross-sectoral meetings and involving villages and sub-districts. This is important to do, so that the implementation continues to run well. Moreover, the government apparatus closest to the community is the village and sub-district governments. So that village and sub-district participation is very much needed in decision making in collaboration. In collaboration on efforts to prevent child marriage, it also involves the health center in terms of participation in providing education related to reproductive health for children.

### **2. Ground Rules and Transparency Process**

The implementation of collaboration certainly requires rules that serve as the basis for implementing activities. Basic rules in collaboration become institutional designs that include basic procedures and regulations in implementing collaboration. Basic rules ensure that the collaboration process runs legally, transparently, inclusively and exclusively. Collaboration will be very effective if it can be sustainable. The institutional environment includes elements of participation, rules or regulations that must be obeyed by the organization if it achieves its stated goals. So it is very important in a cooperative relationship between organizations to have a series of transparency elements and rules that must be obeyed by the organizations involved in the collaboration if they want to achieve their goals.

In this case, the program for preventing child marriage in Central Mamuju Regency is implemented based on the established regulations.

The findings show that in the collaboration to prevent child marriage in Central Mamuju Regency, it is based on the established regulations, namely Law Number 16 of 2019 concerning Amendments to Law Number 1 of 1974 concerning Marriage, Regulation of the Minister of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection of the Republic of Indonesia Number 12 of 2022 concerning the Implementation of Child-Friendly Cities and Regencies, PP Number

16 of 2014 concerning Reproductive Health. In the collaboration to prevent child marriage, the stakeholders involved in it carry out transparently by involving elements of society in socializing the importance of preventing child marriage.

Institutional design refers to the basic protocols and ground rules for collaboration that are critical to procedural legitimacy in collaborative processes (Ansel and Gash, 2008). Where access to the collaborative process itself may be a fundamental design issue (Ansel and Gash, 2008). In the literature it is explained that organizational design emphasizes open processes that are inclusive, exclusive forums, rules and transparent processes (Ansel and Gash, 2008).

According to Ansel and Gash (2008), organizational design in the context of collaborative governance is related to the institutional structure formed as an arena for collaboration between various stakeholders. Important elements in this institutional design include: (1) Inclusive Participation and Exclusive Forum, (2) Basic Rules and Transparency Process. Based on research findings from in-depth interviews, FGDs and observations regarding efforts to prevent child marriage in Central Mamuju Regency, it can be seen that the existing institutional design is in accordance with the principles explained by Ansel and Gash.

### **1. Inclusive Participation and Exclusive Forums**

Inclusive participation is a very important element in effective collaboration. Inclusive participation ensures that all parties involved have the opportunity to express their opinions and contribute to decision-making. In this case, research findings from in-depth interviews, FGDs and observations show that the child marriage prevention program in Central Mamuju Regency actively involves various stakeholders, which reflects the implementation of inclusive participation.

Participation is built on the basis of equality of roles as stakeholders who play an important role in collaboration, where stakeholders are directly involved in decision making, not just consulting the government or only implementing unilateral policies from the government as stakeholders who dominate resources. In addition, inclusive participation is also based on the principle of mutual agreement which is binding based on the results of deliberation and consensus.

Several interview and FGD findings show that the Central Mamuju Regency Government held cross-sectoral collaboration involving the Health Office, Women's Empowerment Office, Ministry of Religion, Education Office, and Social Service. They carried out various activities together, such as reproductive health socialization, provision of prospective brides and grooms, and education related to the risks of early marriage.

For example, the Head of Planning for the Health Office of Central Mamuju Regency stated that his office is actively involved in cross-sector meetings in villages and sub-districts to educate the community about reproductive health and prevent child marriage. The Office of Women's Empowerment, Child Protection, Population Control, and Family Planning (DP3AP2KB) also stated its collaboration with the Ministry of Religion, the Social Service, and the Education Service in terms of preventing child marriage. Through this collaboration, the participation of diverse stakeholders can be established in order to create a more inclusive agreement in dealing with issues of preventing child marriage.

In addition, the deliberation process and exclusive forum for decision-making involving village and sub-district governments are also very important in ensuring that policies taken are in accordance with local conditions. Village and sub-district governments, as the parties closest to the community, play an important role in decision-making and program implementation in the field.

The literature shows that the exclusivity of collaborative forums is still closely related to inclusive participation ((Schuckman, 2001);(Tett et al., 2003)). The emphasis is that the forum is formally organized and meets regularly, consisting of public, private, non-state institutions, including the general public who are involved in decision making (Ansell and Gash, 2008). When the collaborative forum is the only exclusive forum, it will facilitate the collaboration process. Conversely, when there are stakeholders who are not involved, it will encourage them to look for alternative forums (Ansel and Gash, 2008).

### **2. Ground Rules and Transparency Process**

Effective institutional design in collaborative governance requires basic rules that guide collaboration between

organizations to ensure collaborative activities run smoothly and in accordance with the stated objectives. Research findings from in-depth interviews, FGDs and observations show that in the collaboration to prevent child marriage in Central Mamuju Regency, there are already clear basic rules that serve as a reference for all stakeholders.

Some of the regulations that underlie efforts to prevent child marriage include:

- a. Law Number 16 of 2019 concerning Amendments to Law Number 1 of 1974 concerning Marriage, which regulates the age limit for marriage.
- b. Regulation of the Minister of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection of the Republic of Indonesia Number 12 of 2022 concerning the Implementation of Child-Friendly Districts/Cities, which provides guidelines for child protection efforts, including in preventing child marriage.
- c. PP Number 16 of 2014 concerning Reproductive Health, which is the basis for the Health Service in conducting outreach regarding the importance of reproductive health, especially for adolescents.

Through these rules, each stakeholder knows their role and limitations in implementing collaboration. In addition, these regulations ensure that every activity carried out, both in socialization and in decision-making, has a clear and legitimate legal basis.

In addition, the MoU (Memorandum of Understanding) carried out between the Child Protection Service and the Village Head and Sub-district Head also shows a formal step in strengthening a joint commitment to prevent child marriage. This MoU is a clear basis for regulating preventive measures and interventions carried out at the village level.

Transparency process is another important element in institutional design for effective collaboration. Transparency ensures that the entire collaboration process runs honestly, openly, and accountably. Research findings from in-depth interviews, FGDs and observations show that the collaboration to prevent child marriage in Central Mamuju Regency has implemented this transparency principle by involving the community in socialization and reporting activities.

Every stakeholder involved in the child marriage prevention program strives to transparently convey information to the community. For example, the Health Office routinely holds socialization at adolescent health posts to provide education about the risks of early marriage and its impact on reproductive health and maternal and child health. Likewise, the Women's Empowerment Office involves the community in various outreach activities regarding child marriage.

Transparency in budgeting is also seen in the involvement of village and sub-district governments in discussing and planning the budget for child marriage prevention activities. This is important to ensure that the funds used are right on target and used efficiently. Community involvement in every stage, from planning to implementation, is also an indicator of a good transparency process in this collaboration.

Based on research findings from in-depth interviews, FGDs and observations, the institutional design applied in the collaboration to prevent child marriage in Central Mamuju Regency is in accordance with the principles of organizational design in collaborative governance according to Ansel and Gash (2008). Inclusive participation and exclusive forums have been implemented by actively involving various stakeholders in decision making and program implementation. Clear ground rules and transparency in the process are also well implemented, leading to more effective and sustainable collaboration in preventing child marriage.

In a collaboration, there needs to be transparency or openness to each other between stakeholders in every activity carried out, be it budget transparency, program transparency, transparency of benefits for each stakeholder that triggers awareness of the importance of establishing a collaboration in preventing child marriage. The transparency process is important considering that stakeholders in the collaboration need information related to the program to be run. So that any limitations or problems faced are known by those involved.

The literature also shows that clear ground rules and process transparency are important parts of collaborative governance organizational design.(Busenberg, 1999). Both can be understood in terms of procedural legitimacy and building trust. Clear ground rules and consistent application of them can reassure stakeholders that the process is

fair, equitable and open.(Murdock et al., 2005). In addition, the transparency process means that stakeholders can be confident that open negotiations are real and do not accommodate other interests (Ansel and Gash, 2008). In this case, clear roles of stakeholders are also considered important.(Alexander et al., 1998)..

#### 4. CONCLUSION

The organizational design in collaborative governance in preventing child marriage in Central Mamuju Regency shows that the majority of stakeholders have participated and the deliberations or meetings held so far have been inclusive. Ideally, the Ministry of Religion as a vertical institution should participate more actively with the local government and other stakeholders.

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