

# The Role Of Social Values And Norms In Food Diversification Policy Governance Network: A Normative Pillar Analysis Study In North Toraja Regency

Adhe Surya Pratama Putra<sup>1</sup>, Alwi<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1,2</sup>Department of Public Administration, Faculty of Social and Political Sciences, Hasanuddin University, Makassar, Indonesia

---

**Abstract:** This study examines the role of social values and norms in governance networks within food diversification policy implementation in North Toraja Regency, Indonesia. Using a qualitative descriptive approach, the research analyzes how institutional norms, actor values, and cross-sector normative barriers influence policy effectiveness in promoting dietary diversity and reducing rice dependency. Data were collected through in-depth interviews with government officials, farmers, agricultural entrepreneurs, and community members, supplemented by field observations and document analysis. The findings reveal significant normative conflicts between government institutions promoting modernization and communities preserving traditional food practices, creating substantial implementation challenges. Institutional norms favoring bureaucratic compliance conflict with community values emphasizing cultural preservation and subsistence security, while divergent professional standards between government agencies and local stakeholders impede collaborative governance. The study demonstrates that deeply embedded cultural norms surrounding rice consumption as both sustenance and cultural identity marker override formal policy initiatives, resulting in minimal behavioral change despite regulatory frameworks. Cross-sector dialogue remains limited due to incompatible normative frameworks, where technical policy language fails to resonate with community-based practical concerns. These normative barriers prevent the development of shared understanding necessary for effective governance networks, highlighting the critical importance of cultural sensitivity in policy design. The research contributes to governance network literature by demonstrating how traditional values can resist institutional change, particularly in regions with strong cultural identities. The findings suggest that successful food diversification requires normative alignment strategies that bridge institutional and community value systems through culturally appropriate approaches, emphasizing the need for inclusive governance mechanisms that respect both technical expertise and traditional knowledge systems.

**Keywords:** Governance networks, food diversification, normative pillar, institutional theory, policy implementation

---

## INTRODUCTION

Food security represents one of the fundamental pillars of human welfare and sustainable development, particularly in developing countries where agricultural systems form the backbone of national economies. The complexity of food governance has evolved significantly, requiring comprehensive approaches that integrate multiple stakeholders and institutional frameworks (Powell & DiMaggio, 2014; Delreux, 2024). Contemporary food policy implementation increasingly relies on governance networks that encompass various actors, from government agencies to civil society organizations, each operating within distinct normative frameworks that shape their behavior and decision-making processes. The effectiveness of these networks largely depends on the alignment of values, norms, and professional standards among participating actors, making the normative dimension a critical factor in policy success.

The concept of food diversification has gained substantial attention in recent decades as a strategic approach to enhance food security and reduce dependency on single staple crops. According to institutional theory, particularly Scott's (2001) three-pillar framework, the normative pillar plays a crucial role in shaping organizational behavior through shared values, professional standards, and moral obligations. In the context of food policy, normative elements manifest through professional codes of conduct, community values regarding food consumption patterns, and social expectations about stakeholder responsibilities in ensuring food security. These normative dimensions significantly influence how different actors interpret and implement diversification policies, often determining the

success or failure of such initiatives.

Indonesia's food diversification efforts have been documented extensively, revealing the persistent challenges in shifting consumption patterns away from rice dependency toward more varied food sources. The government's commitment to food diversification is reflected in Law No. 18 of 2012 on Food, which emphasizes the importance of utilizing local food resources and promoting dietary variety (Government of Indonesia, 2012). However, studies have shown that implementation remains challenging due to deeply embedded cultural preferences and institutional resistance to change (Fiza et al., 2025; Triyono, 2025). The normative aspects of food choices, rooted in cultural traditions and social status considerations, create significant barriers to policy implementation despite formal regulatory frameworks.

At the regional level, governance networks have emerged as essential mechanisms for coordinating multi-stakeholder efforts in food policy implementation. Research by (Rhodes 1997; Almulhim & Yigitcanlar, 2025) demonstrates that effective governance networks require shared understanding and commitment among participating actors, which are fundamentally shaped by normative considerations. In Indonesian contexts, studies have highlighted the importance of cultural values and social norms in determining the success of agricultural and food policies (Rusliyadi & Chen, 2025). The normative pillar becomes particularly significant in regions with strong cultural identities, where traditional food practices and social expectations can either support or hinder diversification efforts.

North Toraja Regency presents a unique case study for examining the normative dimensions of food diversification governance. The table below demonstrates the predominance of rice production across all sub-districts, with minimal diversification into alternative food crops. Only 4 out of 21 sub-districts show diversification indices above 1.0, indicating limited implementation of food diversification policies despite existing regulatory frameworks.

Table 1. Agricultural Household Food Crop Production by Sub-district in North Toraja Regency, 2023

No.	Sub-district	Rice	Corn	Porang	Cassava	Total Households	Diversification Index*
1	Sopai	1,515	4	0	6	1,525	0.66
2	Kesu	786	1	0	0	787	0.25
3	Sanggalangi	1,609	0	0	0	1,609	0.00
4	Buntao	1,422	5	0	4	1,431	0.63
5	Rantebua	1,282	25	0	11	1,318	2.73
6	Nanggala	1,644	0	0	0	1,644	0.00
7	Tondon	1,326	0	0	0	1,326	0.00
8	Tallunglipu	455	1	0	0	456	0.22
9	Rantepao	413	0	0	0	413	0.00
10	Tikala	1,264	0	0	10	1,274	0.79
11	Sesean	1,609	0	0	0	1,609	0.00
12	Balusu	1,314	0	0	0	1,314	0.00
13	Sadan	1,967	5	0	0	1,972	0.25
14	Bengkelekila	883	0	0	0	883	0.00
15	Sesean Suloara	853	0	0	0	853	0.00
16	Kapala Pitu	777	0	0	0	777	0.00
17	Dende Piongan Napo	1,386	0	0	1	1,387	0.07
18	Awan Rante Karua	737	7	0	22	766	3.93
19	Rindingallo	1,272	0	0	2	1,274	0.16
20	Buntu Pepasan	1,127	0	0	2	1,129	0.18
21	Baruppu	698	0	0	13	711	1.86
	Total	24,339	48	0	62	24,449	0.45

Source: North Toraja Regency Agricultural Census 2023 (Complete Enumeration Results)

The region's rich cultural heritage and traditional agricultural practices create a complex normative environment where modern policy objectives must navigate established social values and community expectations. Local Government Regulation No. 16 of 2019 on Food Management represents a formal attempt to promote diversification, yet its implementation reveals significant gaps between policy intentions and community acceptance (North Toraja Regency Government, 2019). The persistence of rice-dominated consumption patterns, despite the availability of local alternatives such as talas upe and local corn, suggests strong normative influences that resist policy-driven changes.

The governance network approach to food diversification in North Toraja involves multiple actors, including local government agencies, farmers, agricultural extension workers, civil society organizations, and community leaders. Each of these actors operates within distinct normative frameworks that shape their understanding of food security, agricultural development, and community welfare. Agricultural Census data from North Toraja (2023) reveals significant variations in crop diversification across different sub-districts, with many areas showing minimal production of alternative food crops beyond rice. This pattern suggests that normative factors, rather than merely technical or economic constraints, may be influencing farmers' production decisions and community acceptance of diversification initiatives.

Professional norms within the agricultural sector also play a crucial role in shaping policy implementation. Extension workers, government officials, and agricultural researchers each bring professional standards and values that influence how they approach diversification programs. Studies in similar contexts have shown that professional norms can either facilitate or impede policy implementation, depending on how well new initiatives align with existing professional practices and values (Cleaver, 2012; Pak, 2020). The interaction between different professional norms and community values creates a complex normative landscape that requires careful analysis to understand policy implementation challenges.

Previous research on food policy governance has predominantly focused on formal institutional arrangements and economic factors, with limited attention to the normative dimensions that shape actor behavior and network dynamics. While studies such as those by Dewi et al. (2024) have examined inter-agency coordination in food policy, they have not explicitly analyzed how shared values and social norms influence network effectiveness. Similarly, governance network research in Indonesian contexts has typically emphasized structural and regulatory aspects rather than normative foundations (Hendra et al., 2023). This research gap is particularly significant given the strong cultural traditions and social cohesion that characterize Indonesian communities, where normative considerations often override formal regulations. Therefore, this study addresses a critical knowledge gap by focusing specifically on how social values and norms shape governance networks in food diversification policy, contributing to both theoretical understanding of institutional dynamics and practical insights for more culturally sensitive policy implementation in regions with strong traditional identities.

## METHOD

This study employed a qualitative descriptive approach to examine the normative pillar within the governance network of food diversification policy in North Toraja Regency. Data collection was conducted through purposive sampling involving five key informants: the Head of Food Security and Fisheries Department, agricultural household business operators, individual agricultural entrepreneurs, seed/fertilizer distributors, and community members as food consumers. Primary data were gathered through in-depth interviews using structured interview guides and direct field observations conducted at the Food Security and Fisheries Department of North Toraja Regency from May to June 2025. Secondary data were obtained from relevant policy documents, regulations, and literature supporting the governance network analysis. Data analysis followed Miles and Huberman (1994) interactive model, comprising data collection, data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing phases. To ensure research validity and reliability, the study implemented triangulation of data sources, member checking with key informants, rich detailed descriptions, and researcher bias clarification, while maintaining consistency through transcript verification, consistent coding practices, and cross-checking procedures among different researchers throughout the analytical process.

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

### **The Role of Institutional Norms and Organizational Culture in Inter-Agency Collaboration**

The analysis reveals significant gaps in institutional norms governing inter-agency collaboration within North Toraja's food diversification governance network. Government agencies demonstrate a disconnect between stated policy objectives and operational execution, where the Food Security and Fisheries Department operates with clear mandates yet lacks robust mechanisms for cross-sectoral engagement. The organizational culture within government institutions reflects traditional bureaucratic approaches that prioritize hierarchical decision-making over collaborative network governance, creating barriers to effective stakeholder integration.

Evidence from field observations indicates that institutional norms favor top-down policy implementation rather than participatory approaches that would incorporate diverse stakeholder perspectives. The department's focus on regulatory compliance overshadows the development of collaborative frameworks necessary for successful food diversification initiatives. This institutional rigidity manifests in limited consultation processes with farmers, community leaders, and private sector actors, resulting in policies that fail to address ground-level realities and local contexts.

The absence of established protocols for inter-agency coordination creates uncertainty about roles and responsibilities among different stakeholders in the governance network. Scott's (2001) normative pillar emphasizes the importance of shared professional standards and moral obligations in shaping organizational behavior, yet the current institutional framework lacks these binding elements. Research by Panke & Stapel (2004) on multi-level governance demonstrates that successful policy networks require institutionalized norms that facilitate regular interaction and mutual accountability among participating actors. Therefore, establishing formal collaboration protocols and shared performance metrics could enhance inter-agency coordination effectiveness in food diversification policy implementation.

Current institutional arrangements perpetuate siloed approaches to food policy, where each agency operates within its own normative framework without sufficient integration mechanisms. The lack of joint planning sessions, shared budgeting processes, and coordinated monitoring systems reflects weak institutional norms for collaboration. This fragmentation undermines the holistic approach required for effective food diversification, as different aspects of the policy—production, distribution, marketing, and consumption—remain compartmentalized across various agencies. Building on governance network theory, the establishment of inter-agency working groups with defined normative guidelines could significantly improve collaborative capacity and policy coherence (Nicola-Gavrila et al 2025).

### **Actor Values: Local Food Priorities, Economic Interests, and Community Values**

The value systems of different actors within the governance network reveal fundamental tensions that impede food diversification efforts. Government officials prioritize regional food security and reduced dependency on external food sources, viewing diversification as essential for economic resilience and sustainable development. However, these institutional values clash with deeply embedded community values that prioritize rice consumption as both a cultural identity marker and practical necessity. Farmers and community members demonstrate strong attachment to traditional agricultural practices, viewing rice cultivation not merely as economic activity but as cultural heritage preservation.

Economic values among farmers reflect pragmatic considerations that often contradict diversification objectives. Rice production represents economic security through guaranteed household consumption and established market networks, while alternative crops present uncertainty in terms of market demand and profitability. The value system emphasizing subsistence security over market diversification creates resistance to policy initiatives that promote crop variety without addressing underlying economic concerns about market access and price stability for alternative food products.

Community values regarding food extend beyond nutritional considerations to encompass social status, cultural identity, and traditional practices. The research findings align with Scott's (2001) analysis of how normative elements shape organizational behavior through shared values and social expectations. Similar patterns have been documented by Mulya & Hudalah, (2024) in Indonesian agricultural contexts, where cultural values significantly influence adoption of new farming practices and consumption patterns. These findings suggest that successful food diversification requires value alignment strategies that respect cultural preferences while gradually introducing

alternative food options through community-based approaches.

The tension between modernization values promoted by government institutions and traditional values held by communities creates a fundamental challenge for policy implementation. Economic values favoring immediate returns over long-term sustainability further complicate efforts to promote diverse food systems that may require initial investment and market development. Research by Onyeaka et al (2024) on institutional change emphasizes the importance of working within existing value systems rather than attempting to replace them, suggesting that food diversification policies should incorporate traditional values while gradually expanding food options through culturally sensitive approaches.

### **Normative Barriers to Cross-Sector Understanding and Consensus Building**

Significant normative barriers prevent the development of shared understanding among actors across different sectors in the food diversification governance network. Professional norms within government agencies emphasize technical expertise and regulatory compliance, while community norms prioritize practical experience and traditional knowledge systems. These divergent normative frameworks create communication gaps where government officials speak in terms of policy objectives and statistical targets, while farmers and community members focus on practical constraints and cultural considerations.

The absence of common normative reference points undermines consensus-building efforts, as different actors operate with incompatible assumptions about what constitutes appropriate action and desirable outcomes. Government actors view food diversification through the lens of national development goals and bureaucratic achievement measures, while community actors evaluate policies based on immediate practical benefits and cultural compatibility. This normative divergence manifests in mutual skepticism, where government officials perceive community resistance as lack of understanding, while community members view government initiatives as disconnected from local realities.

Cultural norms surrounding authority and decision-making further complicate cross-sector dialogue and consensus building. Traditional community structures emphasize collective decision-making and elder consultation, while government processes rely on formal authority and bureaucratic procedures. Scott's (2001) normative pillar framework explains how these competing normative systems can create institutional conflicts that impede effective collaboration. Wang, (2025) research on common resource management demonstrates that successful governance arrangements require normative compatibility among participating actors, suggesting that bridging organizations could facilitate normative translation between government and community sectors.

The research reveals that existing consultation mechanisms fail to address normative differences, instead relying on information dissemination rather than genuine dialogue and consensus building. Professional training programs for government officials and community capacity building initiatives could help develop shared normative frameworks that respect both technical expertise and traditional knowledge systems. Following the institutional design principles outlined by Liu (2025), creating formal mechanisms for normative exchange and gradual consensus building could enhance cross-sector cooperation in food diversification governance networks.

### **CONCLUSION**

The analysis of the normative pillar in North Toraja's food diversification governance network reveals fundamental institutional weaknesses that significantly impede policy effectiveness. The study demonstrates that divergent value systems between government agencies and community actors create substantial barriers to collaborative governance, where institutional norms prioritizing bureaucratic compliance conflict with community values emphasizing cultural preservation and traditional agricultural practices. The absence of shared normative frameworks undermines cross-sector dialogue and consensus building, resulting in top-down policy implementation that fails to address local contexts and community needs. These findings confirm Scott's (2001) assertion that normative elements are crucial for institutional effectiveness, as the lack of aligned values, professional standards, and moral obligations among network actors prevents the emergence of coherent governance arrangements. The research contributes to governance network literature by highlighting how deeply embedded cultural norms can override formal institutional arrangements, particularly in regions with strong traditional identities. To enhance policy effectiveness, future food diversification initiatives must prioritize normative alignment through culturally sensitive approaches, establishment of bridging organizations, and development of shared performance metrics that respect both technical

expertise and traditional knowledge systems, thereby creating more inclusive and sustainable governance networks that can effectively balance modernization objectives with cultural preservation imperatives.

## REFERENCES

- Almulhim, A., & Yigitcanlar, T. (2025). Understanding Smart Governance of Sustainable Cities: A Review and Multidimensional Framework. *Smart Cities*, 8(4), Article-number. <https://doi.org/10.3390/smartcities8040113>
- Cleaver, F. (2012). *Development through bricolage: Rethinking institutions for natural resource management*. Routledge.
- Delreux, T. (2024). New institutionalism. In *Handbook on European Union public administration* (pp. 22-33). Edward Elgar Publishing. <https://doi.org/10.4337/9781802209013.00010>
- Dewi, R., Maisyura, M., Fitri, D., Malahayati, M., Adila, J., & Hasyem, M. (2024, January). Sustainable development: The role of related government departments in stunting reduction policy in Aceh, Indonesia. In *Proceedings Of International Conference On Social Science, Political Science, And Humanities (Icospolhum)* (Vol. 4, pp. 00021-00021). <https://doi.org/10.29103/icospolhum.v4i.394>
- Fiza, N., Nazir, N., & Tanjung, F. (2025). Local Food Diversification as a Pillar of Sustainable Food Development: A Critical Review of Global and Local Perspectives. *AJARCADE (Asian Journal of Applied Research for Community Development and Empowerment)*, 9(2), 270-279. <https://doi.org/10.29165/ajarcde.v9i2.712>
- Government of Indonesia. (2012). *Law No. 18 of 2012 concerning food*. Jakarta: State Secretariat of the Republic of Indonesia.
- Hendra, O., Sadiatmi, R., & Hidayat, Z. (2023). Governance Network on Aviation Safety: A Systematic Literature Review. *Journal of Airport Engineering Technology (JAET)*, 4(1), 01-11. <https://doi.org/10.52989/jaet.v4i1.114>
- Liu, N. (2025, June). Research on the Innovative Institutional Design of Social Organizations in Legal Governance and the Adaptability of the Rule of Law Environment. In *2025 4th International Conference on Social Sciences and Humanities and Arts (SSHA 2025)* (pp. 103-109). Atlantis Press. [https://doi.org/10.2991/978-2-38476-432-7\\_12](https://doi.org/10.2991/978-2-38476-432-7_12)
- Miles, M. B., & Huberman, A. M. (1994). *Qualitative data analysis: An expanded sourcebook*. sage.
- Mulya, S. P., & Hudalah, D. (2024). Urbanization pressure and farmers' attitudes: implications for agricultural sustainability. *Environment, Development and Sustainability*, 1-34. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10668-024-05150-y>
- Nicola-Gavrila, L., Omarova, A., Kurmanalina, A., & Kalkabayeva, G. (2025). The role of good governance networking in enhancing organizational performance and logistics systems: Insights for distribution economics. *Journal of Distribution Science*, 23(5), 1-11. <https://doi.org/10.15722/jds.23.05.202505.1>
- North Toraja Regency Government. (2019). Regional Regulation No. 16 of 2019 on Food Management (*Peraturan Daerah Kabupaten Toraja Utara Nomor 16 Tahun 2019 tentang Penyelenggaraan Pangan*).
- North Toraja Regency Statistics Office. (2023). Agricultural census of North Toraja Regency 2023: Complete enumeration results (*Sensus Pertanian Kabupaten Toraja Utara 2023: Hasil Pencacahan Lengkap*). BPS Kabupaten Toraja Utara.
- Onyeaka, H., Siyanbola, K. F., Akinsemolu, A. A., Tamasiga, P., Mbaeyi-Nwaoha, I. E., Okonkwo, C. E., ... & Oladipo, E. K. (2024). Promoting equity and justice: harnessing the right to food for Africa's food security. *Agriculture & Food Security*, 13(1), 52. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s40066-024-00505-0>
- Pak, K., Polikoff, M. S., Desimone, L. M., & Saldivar Garcia, E. (2020). The adaptive challenges of curriculum implementation: Insights for educational leaders driving standards-based reform. *Aera Open*, 6(2), 2332858420932828. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2332858420932828>
- Panke, D., & Stapel, S. (2024). Multi-level governance. In *Handbook of Regional Cooperation and Integration* (pp. 417-430). Edward Elgar Publishing. <https://doi.org/10.4337/9781800373747.00028>
- Powell, W. W., & DiMaggio, P. J. (Eds.). (2012). *The new institutionalism in organizational analysis*. University of Chicago press.
- Rhodes, R. A. W. (1997). *Understanding governance: Policy networks, governance, reflexivity and accountability*. Open University Press.
- Rusliyadi, M., & Chen, Y. H. (2025). An Analysis of the Food Security Policy Implementation Framework: The Case of Food Self-Sufficiency and Extension Policy in Indonesia An Analysis of the Food Security Policy Implementation Framework: The Case of Food Self-Sufficiency and Extension Policy in Indonesia.
- Scott, W. R. (2001). *Institutions and organizations* (2nd ed.). Sage Publications.
- Triyono, T. (2025). The Role and Strategy of Village-Owned Enterprises (BUMDES) in Strengthening Food Security Towards Indonesia's Food Sovereignty 2045. *The Journal of Academic Science*, 2(5), 1550-1561. <https://doi.org/10.59613/m9jysd34>
- Wang, J. (2025). Exploring determinants and development paths of rural economy from sustainable common-pool resource governance perspective. *Economics of Governance*, 1-41. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10101-025-00330-6>