Changes In Regional Apparatus Of Medan City In Realizing Agile Government In Medan City

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ABSTRACT: *This research aims to analyze the dynamics of the formation of regional apparatus in Medan City in the context of realizing Agile Government. With the increasing demands of the community for fast and responsive public services, this study explores an effective model for the formation of regional apparatus. The method used is a qualitative approach with in-depth interviews and document analysis from various related sources. The results of the study indicate that changes in the organization of regional apparatus in Medan City in order to realize agile government not only include bureaucratic restructuring, but also require complex individual and institutional adjustments. The Medan City Government addresses this challenge by providing motivation, training, and effective communication to build an adaptive and collaborative work culture. Through discussion forums, socialization, and strengthening collaboration between agencies, employees are encouraged to understand and accept change. The government also emphasizes the importance of integrated management of human resources, finance, and technology in order to improve the efficiency, effectiveness, and satisfaction of public services.This research also identifies challenges in the process of forming regional government units, including employee resistance and resource limitations. Despite these challenges, the proposed model shows potential to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of public services in Medan City. Thus, this research provides significant contributions to the literature on governance and offers practical recommendations for policymakers. Overall, this study emphasizes the importance of an integrated approach in establishing regional government units to achieve agile government, which in turn can increase public satisfaction and trust in the government. These findings are expected to serve as a reference for other regions in their efforts to enhance the quality of public services and government responsiveness.*

Keywords: *Agile Government, Establishment of Regional Government Units, Public Services, Effectiveness, Responsiveness*

1. **INTRODUCTION**

In the context of good governance in Indonesia, establishing regional structures that are both responsive and efficient as well as effective is very important for implementation of the vision articulations by the heads of regions. Transformation reflects a dire necessity on the part of public institutions to answer varied societal complexities and adapt to rapid changes in environmental conditions and is best facilitated under strong reform endeavors rectifying governance structures suggested in recent literature. For instance, (Harun et al., 2021). discussed the need for public sector standards' institutionalization as an essential element to promote accountability and transparency so that organization's process align with broad governance objectives (Harun et al., 2021). Considerable research has also pointed out, especially from Asteriniah and Hestiriniah studies, that responsive public sector management is what has been consistently missing in governance issues toward development thus explaining a link between institutional reforms and effective governance (Asteriniah & Hestiriniah, 2023).

Corruption is still a major governance problem in Indonesia, as seen from the low scores of the country in the Corruption Perception Index by Transparency International which has stayed at 34 for some years now (Handoyo & Maulana, 2019). This is due to the persistence of bureaucratic ineptitude, unclear legal enforcement, and inadequate public participation as indicated by studies on public sector performance and its impacts on economic growth (Tumangkeng et al., 2022). Efforts have since been made towards simplifying the structures of bureaucracy through a plan for restructuring organizations within regional apparatuses (OPD) so as to remove overlapping functions and improve on service delivery while making sure that government functions are working towards local developmental goals as per different governance reform discussions with an emphasis on a vision for integrity-driven governance (Handoyo & Maulana, 2019; Tumangkeng et al., 2022).

A transformative model or Agile Government has also emerged to address the dynamic challenges faced by public institutions. Luna et al. state that Agile Government is the flexibility and collaboration method for governments to adjust rapidly to societal changes. This perception needs a more detailed validation in the Indonesian context since it may not be applicable in a general context without local adaptation (Sapa’ et al., 2024). Practically, where agile principles are infused into governance strategies practice iterative policymaking and encourage digital innovation integration that can provide an even more adaptive offer responding nuancedly to citizen needs as suggested in governance literature (Harun et al., 2021; Vărzaru et al., 2022).

Research results support the ideology that building the pillars of good governance rests on a transparent and accountable governance system. Suggested has been the integration of technologies supporting efficient administrative processes to improve public service delivery as a response to the call of President Joko Widodo in smart and professional public sectors, which aligns with delivering quality public services (Asteriniah & Hestiriniah, 2023; Sapa’ et al., 2024). Increasing dependence on digital tools and methodological frameworks supporting effective governance is mandatory to ensure that public institutions can not only survive but also thrive in a fast-changing, complex age (Handoyo & Maulana, 2019).

In the Indonesian context, the successful implementation of Agile Government is hindered by limited awareness among civil servants, institutional resistance to change, and inconsistent cross-agency coordination. The Grand Design for National Bureaucratic Reform (GDRBN) 2025–2045 proposes strategic priorities such as digital transformation via Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI), AI utilization, regulatory simplification, and human resource development to address these gaps.

Medan, as a metropolitan city and economic hub in North Sumatra with over 3 million residents of diverse cultural backgrounds, offers a unique case for examining organizational change. With its strategic geographic position near ASEAN countries such as Malaysia and Thailand, Medan has significant potential and faces complex governance demands. The city government has acknowledged this by reforming and consolidating several OPDs to better meet contemporary service delivery challenges.

Under Regional Regulation No. 8 of 2022 and Mayor’s Regulation No. 19 of 2020, the City of Medan restructured 11 OPDs through mergers and re-naming, with additional redistribution of duties across multiple departments. For instance, the Department of Education was rebranded as the Department of Education and Culture, while the Department of Food Security was expanded to include agriculture and fisheries (Perda Medan, 2022). These changes were designed to broaden service scopes, reduce redundancy, and enhance administrative responsiveness.

However, such structural changes necessitate comprehensive organizational analysis and performance evaluations. Dynamic workloads and evolving policy mandates require that institutional configurations remain adaptable to both internal changes and external pressures. Evaluation criteria must consider leadership visions, statutory mandates, task alignment, and job-load analyses to ensure organizational effectiveness.

To operationalize Agile Government at the local level, Medan City must not only restructure its apparatus but also provide robust support for affected employees. This includes upskilling, clear communication of organizational objectives, and ensuring synergy among newly merged departments. Without such support, reforms risk undermining staff morale and failing to achieve long-term efficiency gains.

This study is therefore crucial in examining how structural reforms in Medan’s regional apparatus contribute to the realization of Agile Government. It aims to analyze the dynamics of these changes, assess the city government's balancing efforts between continuity and reform, evaluate support mechanisms for affected personnel, and ultimately develop a model for organizational transformation tailored to Indonesia’s urban governance context.

1. **METHOD**

This research employs a qualitative approach aimed at gaining an in-depth understanding of the organizational transformation within the Medan City Government, particularly in its efforts to implement Agile Government principles. The qualitative method is considered appropriate for exploring complex and evolving phenomena because it allows researchers to capture and interpret the lived experiences, perceptions, and behaviors of stakeholders involved in the reorganization of local government apparatuses. As Creswell (2013) asserts, qualitative research facilitates the exploration of meaning that individuals or groups attribute to social or human problems through a dynamic and emergent research process, wherein the researcher becomes an active participant in data collection and interpretation.

The research was conducted in Medan City, the capital of North Sumatra Province, which serves as a major metropolitan area and an economic hub. Medan was selected as the research site because of the various governance challenges it faces, including the underperformance of some regional apparatuses, weak inter-agency coordination, and limited innovation in public service delivery. The focus of the research is on two organizational units that have undergone structural changes. The first is the Department of Food Security, which was transformed into the Department of Food Security, Agriculture, and Fisheries—an expansion model where the department took on new responsibilities. The second is the result of a merger: the Department of Cooperatives and Small and Medium Enterprises was integrated with the Department of Industry and the Department of Trade to form the Department of Cooperatives, Industry, and Trade. These two units represent different models of organizational restructuring, one through functional expansion and the other through institutional integration.

To collect relevant data, both primary and secondary sources were utilized. Primary data were obtained through in-depth interviews and focus group discussions, while secondary data were derived from documentation such as regulations, official reports, and academic literature. A total of 20 informants were selected using purposive sampling. They included top officials such as the Mayor and Regional Secretary of Medan, members of the City Parliament (DPRD), heads and secretaries of the two departments, division heads, frontline employees who experienced the organizational changes, and external stakeholders such as academics and community leaders. Each informant was chosen based on their knowledge and involvement in the restructuring process and their ability to provide meaningful insights into the dynamics of organizational change and its impact on the delivery of public services.

The data collection process consisted of several techniques. In-depth interviews were conducted to elicit rich, detailed narratives about the rationale behind organizational reforms, the adaptation of duties and functions, and the strategic steps taken post-restructuring. Observational methods were employed to document real-time processes and interactions within the organizational settings, offering a complementary layer of understanding. Focus group discussions were conducted with affected employees to capture collective responses, challenges, and aspirations related to the changes. Documentary analysis was also conducted using relevant government regulations, policy documents, and internal memoranda to contextualize the organizational transformations within existing legal frameworks.

Data analysis was carried out concurrently with data collection, following the interactive model proposed by Miles and Huberman. The process began with validating the data through credibility checks, ensuring that the interpretations were accurate and reflected participants’ realities. The researcher engaged in prolonged involvement in the field to reduce bias and gain deeper insights. Descriptive transcriptions of interviews and observations were compiled, followed by data reduction to identify key themes and patterns. Coding was applied to classify the data systematically, and the results were organized into thematic narratives to facilitate interpretation and presentation.

To ensure the reliability and robustness of the findings, several validation techniques were applied. Member checking was conducted by returning to the research setting and discussing interpretations with the original informants to confirm the accuracy of the data. Triangulation of methods and data sources was also performed by comparing information from interviews, observations, and documents across various stakeholders. Additionally, external auditing was carried out by consulting independent experts to review the methodology, data collection tools, and interpretive processes.

The interpretation of findings involved both contextual and theoretical reflections. The researcher synthesized participants’ perspectives with relevant academic theories to construct conceptual insights into how regional apparatuses adapt to Agile Government demands. These interpretations were then used to generate policy recommendations that are not only practically useful but also theoretically grounded. The ultimate goal was to develop an inductive model of organizational transformation that aligns with the principles of agile governance and is responsive to the unique institutional, political, and cultural context of Medan City.

This research also places great importance on data validity and trustworthiness. Triangulation was conducted not only in terms of methods but also across data sources and theoretical frameworks. Methodological triangulation involved comparing data obtained through interviews with data from observations and documents. Source triangulation was used to compare perspectives between different types of informants. Theoretical triangulation was carried out by interpreting the data through multiple theoretical lenses to ensure comprehensive analysis. These efforts collectively ensure the credibility, dependability, and transferability of the research findings.

Overall, this study offers a comprehensive methodological design that enables the systematic examination of bureaucratic reform and organizational restructuring in the context of Agile Government. The insights derived from this research are expected to contribute to the broader discourse on public sector innovation and governance transformation in Indonesia, providing actionable knowledge for policymakers, practitioners, and scholars alike.

1. **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

**Dynamics of Organizational Changes in Medan City in the Context of Agile Government**

The organizational changes that took place in Medan City under the initiative to implement agile government brought forth a transformative impact not only on the structure and efficiency of public services but also on the civil servants operating within the Regional Apparatus Organizations (OPD). The most visible manifestation of this change was the merging and streamlining of several OPDs to eliminate duplication and enhance administrative efficiency. However, such restructuring inevitably altered existing roles and responsibilities, demanding quick and often complex adaptation from staff. These dynamics highlight the intricate interplay between structural transformation and human resource management in the public sector.

The urgency for reform was driven by growing public expectations for faster and more responsive service delivery. As Suryadi Panjaitan, Expert Staff to the Mayor of Medan on Governance, Law, and Politics, explained: “*The push for restructuring has been around for a while. But what made it more urgent was the rising expectations from the public they want services that are quick and efficient, without bureaucratic entanglements. If we keep the same bulky structure, we can’t meet those expectations. So there must be a serious step to reform our agencies not just structurally, but also in terms of mindset and working style*.”

Benny Iskandar Nasution, Head of the Department of Cooperatives, SMEs, Industry, and Trade, echoed this sentiment, stating, “*In recent years, the workload and complexity of urban development issues have increased. But some of our organizational structures remain rigid and unresponsive. This affects our planning and execution. Therefore, we need to restructure to become more flexible and efficient. Especially since the Mayor’s vision emphasizes fast and accurate service*.”

Hasyim, S.E., Chair of the Medan City DPRD, added a regulatory perspective, saying, “*When a Type B agency is merged with another of the same or different type, the resulting structure is based on Article 54 of Government Regulation No. 18 of 2016. It’s clear and detailed why such mergers are justified to improve performance and align with the city’s development goals. Hopefully, these merged OPDs will deliver better services and effectively realize the city’s programs*.”

Following the recognition of change needs, the city administration proceeded with careful planning and design of a new organizational structure. This phase focused on mapping overlapping functions, ensuring synergy between formerly distinct units, and reallocating roles based on departmental mandates. For example, the Department of Food Security, Agriculture, and Fisheries was formed by integrating several agencies. This allowed for a more comprehensive approach to addressing food security issues, enabling cross-functional collaboration and more strategic resource allocation.

Adapting to these changes required staff to internalize new job functions and develop new competencies. Citra Pelita Halawa, previously with the Food Security Agency, reflected: “*We must open ourselves to changes in duties, think positively about them, and increase our capacity by learning and seeking information, so we can adapt quickly*.” M. Didi Ferdipan from the same agency added, “*With good governance capabilities, we can respond better and continuously adapt to these changes*.”

Navriani Harahap emphasized the proactive mindset necessary for successful adaptation: “*When changes happen in processes or practices, I ask for clarification from colleagues or supervisors to plan better. I use these changes as opportunities to gain measurable, value-driven knowledge that can benefit the organization*.”

The city government ensured that these changes were not implemented in isolation. A critical component of the transition was the robust communication and socialization strategy. Workshops and consultations were conducted to help employees understand the rationale behind the changes. One staff member shared, “*The briefings really helped us understand our new roles and how we can contribute. It made the transition less intimidating*.”

Jonson Erianto Sitindaon stressed the importance of building awareness: “*Stimulating awareness of change means motivating a shift in mindset and diagnosing bureaucratic barriers that hinder progress*.” Rachmad Hidayat added, “*It’s not enough to have formal communication. We need narratives that resonate with our daily experiences to truly internalize Agile Government values*.”

The administration also conducted SWOT analyses and organizational climate reviews to anticipate challenges. “*Our SWOT review helped us understand external threats, such as the rapid growth of digital technology and the public's demand for faster services*,” said Sitindaon.

Moreover, the city government actively engaged staff in the transition through FGDs and surveys. “*These sessions allowed us to express our thoughts and provide feedback*,” said Citra Pelita Halawa. “*Surveys also gave us a broader platform to share our perceptions*.”

In the implementation phase, the government launched various agile initiatives. Employees were grouped into flexible teams with regular evaluations to troubleshoot and improve workflows. “*We were divided into working groups and received routine evaluations to identify obstacles and quickly adjust our strategies*,” said Halawa.

One structural change involved redesigning Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) to be modular and iterative, making them adaptable to change. Sitindaon noted, “*The previous SOPs were too rigid. The new format allows units to adjust procedures quickly without waiting for comprehensive revisions, enabling continuous improvement based on real-time feedback*.”

The city also established cross-functional agile units to promote collaborative problem-solving across departments. “*Agile units help bridge services between public-facing units and tech support*,” said Halawa. “*This boosts service quality significantly*.”

The final stage of change, known as “refreezing,” involved embedding new values and work patterns into the organization. Performance evaluations shifted to focus on innovation and tangible outcomes. Sitindaon emphasized, “*We’re now assessed based on results and innovation. That motivates us to keep improving and thinking creatively*.”

Leadership played a pivotal role throughout the process. Consistent support from managers helped staff feel reassured and motivated. Ongoing feedback and evaluations ensured that the reforms remained responsive and effective. One employee shared, “*The training really helped us adapt and perform better in our new roles*.”

As Sitindaon concluded, “*Change is normal in government. What matters is how we adaptthrough proactive behavior, creative thinking, and solution-oriented mindsets. We need to want the change, be accountable, stay realistic, anticipate obstacles, stay positive and optimistic, and above all, be grateful*.”

These testimonies and observations affirm that the dynamics of organizational change in Medan were complex, human-centered, and deeply aligned with the principles of agile government. The reform process, though challenging, succeeded in laying the foundation for a more flexible, responsive, and citizen-oriented governance structure.

**Efforts by the Medan City Government to Balance the Status Quo and Bureaucratic Structural Changes**

The restructuring of regional apparatuses in Medan City was not simply a mechanical redistribution of organizational units. It was a complex process that required the local government to strike a balance between maintaining bureaucratic stability and introducing meaningful institutional changes. The Medan City Government recognized that any disruption to the status quo could cause resistance, confusion, or operational inefficiency if not managed strategically. As such, the reform process was carefully calibrated to uphold continuity while also fostering adaptive capabilities.

One of the government’s key strategies was to proactively address psychological and emotional resistance among civil servants. Many employees felt uncertain about their future roles, particularly those who were reassigned or absorbed into new departments. To counter this, leaders within the city administration made consistent efforts to motivate their staff. Mr. DR, the Head of the Department of Cooperatives, Industry, and Trade, explained, “*We encouraged our staff to see this change as a professional opportunity, not a burden. It’s about growing together with the organization*.”

Motivation took the form of both formal guidance and informal encouragement. Supervisors often held personal dialogues with team members to acknowledge their anxieties and reassure them of job security and relevance. Ms. FS, a mid-level staff member, recalled, “*At first I was nervous because I didn’t know what the new tasks would involve. But our division head gave us the confidence that our skills would still be useful—and needed*.”

The city government also sought to foster a more adaptive organizational culture. This was done by promoting openness, flexibility, and innovation across departments. Employees were encouraged to propose improvements and to take ownership of their new roles. The aim was to build a culture where change was not feared but embraced. According to Mr. K, Secretary of the Department of Food Security, Agriculture, and Fisheries, “*Adaptability is the new competency. If we want to serve the people better, we must be able to move with the times*.”

To institutionalize change, the government embedded reform principles into everyday administrative processes. This included revising Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) to reflect new workflows, encouraging interdepartmental collaboration, and launching cross-functional task forces. Mr. DR emphasized, “*We didn’t just change names and structures we changed how people work. SOPs had to be realigned to new mandates*.”

Efforts to improve coordination were vital. The merging of departments often led to overlapping functions, which could create confusion without proper alignment. The government responded by hosting coordination meetings, assigning liaison officers, and drafting joint operational plans between previously separate units. “*We’re now more synchronized*,” said Mr. K. “*The fisheries and agriculture teams used to work in silos, but now they collaborate on programs like SIMPANG*.”

To further balance continuity with change, the city government implemented a system of gradual transitions. Employees were not expected to fully adapt overnight. Training sessions and mentoring programs were spaced out over several weeks to allow room for learning and adjustment. Ms. RL, a senior administrator, stated, “*It wasn’t a shock-and-go process. We were given time and guidance to ease into our new functions*.”

One significant effort was in the area of resource alignment. Human, financial, and technological resources were assessed and reallocated to ensure that each reorganized department could function optimally. This was crucial in avoiding resource bottlenecks that could derail reform. “*We reviewed our budgeting and ensured no one was left without tools or support*,” Mr. DR noted.

Communication was another cornerstone of the government’s balancing strategy. Leaders ensured that staff at all levels understood the reasons for change, the goals being pursued, and the benefits to both civil servants and the community. “*Communication builds trust*,” said Ms. FS. “*When I understood why the reorganization was happening, I could support it with my whole heart*.”

Transparency was upheld not only through announcements but also through ongoing dialogue and listening sessions. Feedback was collected regularly, and adjustments were made based on employees’ suggestions. This participatory approach helped to mitigate feelings of imposition and fostered a sense of shared ownership. “*We weren’t just told what would happen; we were part of shaping it*,” said Mr. I, a staff officer.

The role of leadership at all levels was critical in maintaining equilibrium between change and stability. Supervisors were trained to act as facilitators of change, not just enforcers of policy. Their role included mentoring, coaching, and resolving conflicts that arose from overlapping roles or unclear boundaries. Mr. K shared, “*Leaders have to be empathetic. Structural change means nothing if we lose the people in the process*.”

In addition to internal strategies, the government also benchmarked with other cities that had undergone similar transitions. Comparative learning enabled them to anticipate challenges and apply best practices suited to Medan’s unique governance landscape. “*We learned from cities like Bandung and Surabaya how they dealt with cultural resistance and technology gaps*,” Mr. DR remarked.

One of the more innovative solutions was the integration of digital platforms to support workflow adaptation. These tools helped staff familiarize themselves with new processes and document management systems. “*Digitalization made the transition easier and more traceable*,” said Ms. RL. “*Even reporting became more streamlined*.”

The reforms were continuously monitored using performance metrics that balanced qualitative and quantitative indicators. Evaluation was not limited to output, but extended to behavioral indicators such as collaboration quality, problem-solving initiative, and leadership responsiveness. “*It’s not just about what we deliver but how we deliver it*,” noted Mr. K.

In navigating the delicate balance between status quo and structural change, the Medan City Government demonstrated a strong commitment to people-centered reform. By investing in communication, motivation, training, collaboration, and leadership development, the administration managed to preserve institutional stability while shifting toward a more agile and responsive bureaucratic system. This effort set a significant precedent for urban governance transformation in Indonesia.

**Support Provided by the Medan City Government to Employees Affected by Organizational Changes**

The organizational restructuring undertaken by the Medan City Government not only impacted institutional configurations but also had significant implications for the civil servants working within those institutions. Recognizing this, the local government adopted a proactive approach in providing comprehensive support to ensure a smooth transition for employees affected by the changes. This support was aimed at reducing resistance, fostering adaptability, and sustaining service effectiveness in the newly merged and expanded departments.

A central component of this support was the implementation of communication strategies that emphasized clarity, transparency, and consistency. The government prioritized early and continuous dissemination of information through various forums, such as meetings, internal memos, and direct engagements between leaders and employees. These communication efforts aimed to minimize confusion and anxiety among staff members. As noted by Mr. DR, Head of the Department of Cooperatives, Industry, and Trade, “*The socialization efforts were intended to reassure staff that the changes were not a threat but an opportunity for growth and improvement*.”

In addition to mass communication, interactive platforms were also utilized to enhance understanding and buy-in. Workshops and discussion forums provided employees the opportunity to engage directly with management, raise concerns, and receive clarification. This two-way communication approach helped to build trust and promote a sense of inclusion in the change process. Ms. FS, a staff member from the same department, shared, “*The discussions helped me feel seen and heard. I was worried at first, but once I understood the new structure and what was expected of me, I became more confident*.”

The government’s efforts extended beyond communication to include targeted training and capacity-building initiatives. Recognizing that changes in structure often demand new skills, the Medan City Government facilitated competency-based training for staff to align their abilities with the new organizational demands. These included digital skills development, service innovation workshops, and orientation sessions on updated Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs). According to Mr. K, Secretary of the Department of Food Security, Agriculture, and Fisheries, “*We saw an increased need to prepare our team with the necessary competencies so they could contribute effectively in this new environment*.”

Monitoring and evaluation mechanisms were put in place to track the effectiveness of the changes and identify any ongoing issues. Performance indicators were reviewed periodically to assess whether the restructuring had met its intended objectives. The feedback collected was then used to inform adaptive strategies. Mr. DR explained, “*We continuously monitored the service output after the merger, and we saw improvements in coordination, though there are still areas where we need to improve*.”

The Medan City Government also implemented emotional and psychological support strategies to maintain staff morale. Changes of this magnitude often generate uncertainty, and the government acknowledged the importance of psychological readiness. Senior managers were trained to act as change champions, guiding their teams through the transition. Ms. RL, a senior staff member, stated, “*The support from our supervisors during this period was crucial. They helped us navigate uncertainty with empathy and clear direction*.”

Another important aspect of support was ensuring the continuity of employment and clarity of job descriptions. In reorganizations, ambiguity regarding roles can be a source of anxiety. The city administration addressed this by issuing updated job descriptions and holding briefings to explain changes in duties and reporting lines. “*When the new organizational map was shared, it helped me understand where I fit in. That was very important*,” recalled Mr. I, a mid-level staff officer.

To further ease the transition, the government facilitated cross-functional collaboration by encouraging interdepartmental dialogues and task force initiatives. This not only broke silos but also created opportunities for peer learning and mentorship. “*Working with new teams brought fresh perspectives and made us more open to learning from others*,” Ms. FS added.

Incentives and recognition were also introduced to reinforce positive adaptation. Staff who demonstrated initiative, innovation, and leadership during the transition were acknowledged through internal appreciation mechanisms. According to Mr. DR, this recognition played a significant role in motivating employees to embrace new responsibilities and demonstrate proactive behavior.

Beyond internal support, the Medan City Government also engaged external consultants and facilitators during the early phase of restructuring. These experts helped design transition frameworks and provided neutral perspectives that informed the government’s change management strategy. “*It was useful to have third-party input, especially during the planning stages. It helped us benchmark against best practices*,” said Mr. K.

Furthermore, the institutionalization of feedback loops ensured that employees’ voices remained part of the reform process. Suggestion boxes, regular surveys, and anonymous reporting channels were provided to capture employee sentiments and suggestions. According to Ms. RL, “*Knowing that our feedback mattered encouraged us to be more honest and engaged*.”

The leadership also emphasized the importance of aligning personal goals with organizational objectives. Supervisors were instructed to facilitate individual goal-setting sessions, helping staff members to see how their work contributed to broader public service missions. “*When I saw how my work helped improve food security data management, I felt more motivated*,” said Ms. A, an officer involved with the SIMPANG system.

Technological support played a critical role in reducing friction during the transition. Digital platforms were introduced to streamline workflows, manage documents, and enhance internal communication. Training on these tools was provided, especially for older employees who were less digitally literate. “*The IT support team was very patient with us*,” Mr. I admitted.

The government also promoted a narrative of shared ownership and purpose throughout the transition. By framing the change as a collective journey rather than a top-down directive, the administration succeeded in fostering a sense of solidarity. “*We were reminded constantly that this change was for the people of Medan, and that helped keep us grounded*,” noted Mr. K.

In conclusion, the City Government of Medan implemented a multi-pronged approach, with empathy at the heart, toward support for workers affected by an organizational restructuring exercise. Transparent communication and participation inclusivity, training and monitoring, psychological support, technological facilitation, and recognition enabled guiding civil servants through a massive change in bureaucracy. This, therefore created a resilient responsive local bureaucracy based on the principles of Agile Government.

**Organizational Change Model in Realizing Agile Government in Medan City**

Table GELORA Organizational Change Model

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Stage** | **Focus** | **Key Strategies** |
| Unfreezing | Raising awareness of the need for change and diagnosing traditional bureaucratic obstacles | * Socialization of Agile values * SWOT analysis * Organizational climate assessment * Cross-unit FGDs * Internal employee surveys |
| Moving | Transforming mindset, work processes, and structures to become adaptive | * Redesign of SOPs to be modular and iterative * Formation of agile cross-functional teams * Implementation of Scrum/Kanban for service delivery * Cultivation of experimentation culture |
| Refreezing | Institutionalizing agile values and ensuring sustainability through policy integration | * Embedding Agile principles into local regulations and SOPs * Outcome- and innovation-based performance evaluation * Establishment of Center of Agile Governance * Continuous evaluation and incentive systems |

The transformation of Medan City’s bureaucracy into an agile and adaptive governance system was structured around a strategic model known as GELORA (Gerakan Lincah Organisasi Responsif dan Adaptif), which serves as a dynamic blueprint for government organizational change. This model draws from Kurt Lewin’s three-stage change theory—Unfreezing, Moving, and Refreezing and aligns it with the principles of Agile Government, namely adaptability, responsiveness, collaboration, and innovation in public service delivery.

The main goal in the Unfreezing stage was to make people in the organization understand why change was very necessary. It started with sharing agile values by using communication methods that involve everyone and relate to daily experiences of workers. Tools like SWOT analysis and climate surveys helped find out where the structure and culture were stiff. This part also talked about getting employees involved by using focus group discussions (FGDs) and inside surveys to spot both where resistance comes from and who can be a champion for the change in every department.

The Moving stage initiated the implementation of adaptive reforms, including flexible redesigns of bureaucratic systems and procedures. Modularization of Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) enabled faster revisions that could take effect in real time. Agile teams were formed within functional units to share agility across departments and to institutionalize a holistic approach as an answer to complex problems. Scrum and Kanban were adopted by project teams for iterative, user-centered innovation. An experiment-based approach was introduced in this phase by making staff learn from failures with rapid feedback loops and adjustments based on data.

In the Refreezing stage, institutionalization of changes ensured long-term sustainability by embedding Agile values into local regulations and organizational SOPs thereby safeguarding the reform in case there is any leadership turnover. This included shifting performance evaluation from compliance-based assessment to an outcome-based and innovation-oriented metric. Also, the creation of a Center of Agile Governance as a hub for best practice dissemination and training plus continuous development of civil service competence aligned with agility added more importance to it.

The GELORA model shall constitute a transformative path that changes not only the structure but also the culture and functionality of public administration. It is not a reform of procedures but rather an invention—a reinvention, in fact—of how local governments perform their functions to be more citizen-centric and transparent as well as responsive to the dynamic needs of the community.

**Discussion**

The implementation of Agile Government in Medan City marks a significant transformation in bureaucratic practices, reflecting a broader trend in public administration toward adaptability, transparency, and responsiveness. This transformation aligns with contemporary research on organizational reform and digitalization, particularly the growing emphasis on integrated, data-driven governance systems (Dzvinchuk et al., 2022). Medan's shift toward agile governance involved more than structural restructuring; it was a multidimensional process that demanded the alignment of political will, administrative coordination, and human adaptability.

The merger and reorganization of regional apparatuses, such as the consolidation of the Department of Food Security, Agriculture, and Fisheries, exemplify a strategic realignment toward multifunctional governance. This mirrors what (LENGARI et al., 2022) describe as a need for improved interdepartmental collaboration in public sector reform. In Medan’s case, this structural consolidation necessitated new workflows, redefined mandates, and increased communication across functional boundaries highlighting the complexity of implementing reform in practice.

Technological adoption emerged as a critical enabler of this transformation. Digital platforms were used to streamline internal processes, enhance reporting accuracy, and improve service delivery. This experience is consistent with (Imanbekova et al., 2024), who emphasize that digitalization in public administration facilitates equitable access and operational transparency. In Medan, such tools were instrumental not only in boosting efficiency but also in reducing resistance by providing clarity and reducing ambiguity in roles—a challenge frequently cited during bureaucratic (LENGARI et al., 2022; Mikkelsen et al., 2022).

Institutional responses to resistance played a major role in sustaining reform momentum. The city government employed strategies such as targeted communication, motivational engagement, and training programs to build employee readiness and capacity. These align with the reform strategies suggested by (Androniceanu et al., 2022), who argue that organizational adaptation is essential for enhancing public service outcomes and employee satisfaction during institutional change.

Leadership emerged as a decisive factor in navigating this transition. The role of supervisors evolved beyond administrative functions into that of facilitators, mentors, and motivators. This supports (Mikkelsen et al., 2022) assertion that leadership quality is integral to the professionalization of bureaucracy and the successful embedding of reforms. The balance between top-down direction and bottom-up engagement observed in Medan supports the inclusive model of public administration advocated by (Errida & Lotfi, 2021).

Internal communication strategies adopted by Medan City further strengthened the reform process. Through participatory models such as workshops, focus group discussions, and open forums, employees were engaged and informed, fostering psychological safety and collective ownership. Lavee et al. underscore that such supportive organizational environments significantly improve policy engagement and reduce bureaucratic inertia (Lavee et al., 2018). The city’s approach to embedding feedback mechanisms reflects the iterative principles of agile governance (Portillo & Kras, 2020).

Medan’s transformation is conceptually grounded in Lewin’s change theory, operationalized through the GELORA model, which frames change in three phases: unfreezing, moving, and refreezing. This structured yet adaptive model offers a practical framework for embedding agile values within a bureaucratic context. Lin highlights the relevance of Lewin’s model for structuring public reform (Lin, 2023).

Digitally facilitated performance monitoring was another dimension of reform success. By digitizing administrative workflows, the city was able to track progress and identify challenges in real time, supporting more responsive governance. This resonates with findings by (Zhuk et al., 2022), who affirms that digital tools significantly elevate the quality and accountability of public services. The linkage between digital systems and service responsiveness further validates the city’s agile approach.

The consolidation of overlapping functions, combined with digital and managerial reforms, has the potential to create a more streamlined and transparent bureaucracy. However, sustaining these improvements depends on continued investment in training, institutional learning, and policy coherence. As shown in other contexts, agile transformation is not a one-time event but a continuous evolution shaped by both internal capabilities and external demands (Dzvinchuk et al., 2022).

In conclusion, the Medan City Government’s agile transformation represents a compelling case of localized bureaucratic reform grounded in global principles. By integrating technological adaptation, responsive leadership, robust internal communication, and iterative change models, Medan has laid the foundation for a more effective and engaged public administration. This experience offers valuable lessons for other local governments aiming to modernize through agile governance, highlighting the importance of context-sensitive strategies and institutional commitment.

1. **CONCLUSION**

The dynamics of organizational transformation at the regional apparatuses of Medan City prove that Agile Government requires much more than mere bureaucratic restructuring to be attained. It requires complex adjustments at the institutional and individual levels, too. The merger and downsizing of the regional agencies (OPDs) precipitated a change in functions that had to be adjusted quickly within the new structure and climate of work; thus, it elicited varied responses from employees that training capacity-building for clarity of roles is required. Resistance to change was experienced by the organization internally, an increased need for cross-sector communication, and strengthened collaboration among all integrated units. The support of leadership agility value internalization and new redesigned standard operating procedure (SOP) requirements would ensure in managing turbulence and sustaining consistency in transition.

In order to balance the status quo with structural changes, the Medan City Government encouraged the employees to motivate themselves in preparing new duties in the reorganized departments. This motivation would create a good understanding, and role confidence, and would pave the way for organizational engagement. The government also advocated for an adaptive and open organizational culture where innovation could be fostered and encouraged to participate in the change process. Clear reasons for change communicated transparency were key in developing ownership and commitment. Moreover, inter-agency collaboration is strengthened through effective communication mechanisms towards shared goals, operational efficiency, and integrated program delivery.

Communication and socialization efforts comprised discussion forums and workshops for effective strategic communication to the staff about the purpose of changes, allowing them to air their views directly with top management. Such open dialogue improved trust between leadership and employees. Evaluation and monitoring mechanisms were also instituted to ensure that adjustments were responding to the dynamism of public needs. Paths have been opened for bureaucratic simplification because this reform reduces task duplication and strengthens allocation of resources.

A good way to get Agile Government in Medan is by putting together people, money, and technology. With training, clear finances, and online tools such as e-government, the city has made service better, quicker to help, and more citizens happy.

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