

Organizational Resilience in Sustainable Public Sector Innovation Amidst Budget Efficiency

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Abstract

National budget-efficiency policy poses a significant challenge to the sustainability of local public sector innovation. This study examines the organizational resilience mechanisms underlying the sustainability of “Ngofa Sedano,” a digital procurement-coaching forum run by the Procurement Unit (UKPBJ) of Tidore Kepulauan City, which has persisted for more than five years without dedicated budget support. Using a qualitative approach with an embedded single-case study design, data were collected through in-depth interviews with four informants and supporting documents (regulations, standard operating procedures, and budget records), then analyzed thematically using an organizational resilience capability framework. The findings show that the innovation’s sustainability rests on three interrelated capabilities: anticipation (internal readiness prior to external rollout), coping through resource bricolage (self-directed learning and use of free platforms), and adaptation through formal institutionalization and tiered staff regeneration. These findings explain the mechanism behind the sustainability of a crisis-born public sector digital innovation, while offering practical implications for local governments facing similar fiscal pressure.

Introduction

The demand for budget efficiency has become a structural challenge for regional governments in Indonesia, especially after the publication of the Presidential Instruction of the Republic of Indonesia Number 1 of 2025 concerning Expenditure Efficiency in the Implementation of the APBN and APBD for the 2025 Fiscal Year, which directed all regional heads to limit ceremonial spending, honorariums and official travel (Instruction of the President of the Republic of Indonesia Number 1 of 2025). This policy places public sector innovation at a critical crossroads: on the one hand, regional governments are required to continue to encourage governance reform as mandated by Government Regulation Number 38 of 2017 concerning Regional Innovation (Government Regulation of the Republic of Indonesia Number 38 of 2017), but on the other hand the fiscal space to finance this innovation is increasingly narrowing.

Operationally at the local level, Tidore Islands Mayor's Regulation Number 50 of 2022 concerning Regional Innovation requires that every innovation meet certain formal criteria and be reported accompanied by supporting data and also regulates that the budget allocation for an innovation will be stopped in the following year if it is declared unsuccessful (Tidore Islands Mayor's Regulation Number 50 of 2022). This phenomenon is evident in Tidore Islands City, an island region in North Maluku Province which in the last five years has experienced a dramatic increase in the number of regional innovations, from 11 innovations (2022) to 227 innovations in 2025 (see Figure 1), following the issuance of the mayor's instructions requiring each regional apparatus to produce a minimum of three innovations accompanied by reward and punishment mechanisms. However, not all innovations born from administrative

encouragement are able to survive, in line with systematic findings that the public sector innovation literature still focuses on the adoption stage and tends to ignore the post-adoption stage (de Vries, Bekkers, & Tummers, 2016; Duit, 2016).

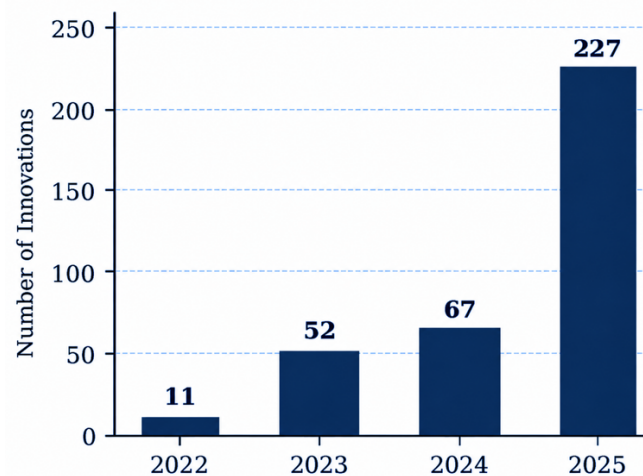


Figure 1. Growth in the Number of Regional Innovations in Tidore Islands City, 2022–2025 (Source: field data, processed)

This symptom is clearly visible when comparing two digital innovations in the City of Tidore Islands. The "Ngofa Sedano" innovation owned by the Goods/Services Procurement Work Unit (UKPBJ) is a forum for coaching and coordinating procurement actors based on the video conferencing application (Zoom) which was born informally during the pandemic but has remained consistent for more than five years without special budget support. The context of improving the procurement performance of Tidore Islands City more broadly is also reflected in the achievements of the Goods and Services Procurement Section of the Regional Secretariat, where Ngofa Sedano is based, which succeeded in making Tidore Islands City the only fastest city in Indonesia in the announcement of the General Procurement Plan (RUP) for Fiscal Year 2024, with 38 Regional Work Units (SKPD) completing the announcement of 7,397 procurement packages worth IDR 549,046,000,000 through the General Procurement Plan Information System (SiRUP) application (RRI, 2023; Farhan, 2023). On the other hand, not all innovations have similar paths; some experienced problems post-launch and were unable to survive. This shows that the birth of innovation does not necessarily guarantee its sustainability (Marsh et al., 2004; Mahpudin, 2022).

The Ngofa Sedano phenomenon is also part of a wider wave, when the COVID-19 pandemic forced many governments in various countries to suddenly accelerate the digital transformation of public services in response to the crisis (Agostino, Arnaboldi, & Lema, 2021; Raghavan, Demircioglu, & Orazgaliyev, 2025). However, this kind of digital acceleration born of the pressure of a crisis does not necessarily guarantee its sustainability after the momentum of the crisis subsides and the initial urgency fades (Brown et al., 2023; Nakazawa, 2024; Braithwaite, 2024; Wang, 2025). The question of how a digital innovation born from the momentum of a crisis can continue to survive after the crisis, instead of fading away with the loss of initial urgency, has not been answered in depth in the context of local government in Indonesia (Buck et al., 2022; Bremmer, 2022; Kronblad & Envall, 2024). In fact, the sustainability of an organizational entity cannot be explained simply through the momentum of its emergence but rather requires an understanding of the dynamic capabilities that enable it to anticipate, overcome and adapt to disruptions (Duchek, 2020). Departing from this gap, this article aims to explore the organizational resilience mechanisms that underlie the sustainability of Ngofa

Sedano's innovation by using the organizational resilience capability framework which divides resilience into three stages: anticipation, coping and adaptation (Duchek, 2020). To enrich the analysis at the coping stage, this research also borrows the concept of resource bricolage to explain how organizations with limited resources can "create something from nothing" through the recombination of available resources (Baker & Nelson, 2005; Carstensen et al., 2023).

Based on this description, this study formulates three research questions as follows: first, how does anticipatory capability underlie the formation of the Ngofa Sedano innovation in the early stages of its emergence; second, how coping capabilities, including resource bricolage practices, enable this innovation to continue despite budget constraints and initial employee resistance; and third, how adaptation capabilities strengthen the sustainability of these innovations across time, personnel changes, and leadership changes (Mfono, 2024; Greiff, 2025).

Methods

Research Approach and Design

This research uses a qualitative approach with an embedded single-case study design (Yin, 2018). The main unit of analysis is Ngofa Sedano's innovation, with three sub-units of analysis in the form of the perspectives of three informants in different positions. This case was chosen purposively using the logic of extreme/critical case sampling (Yin, 2018), namely a case that theoretically "should be vulnerable" without a special budget, in an island region, and prone to leadership changes but empirically actually lasted more than five years. Apart from the three core informants, this research also involved one additional informant at the macro policy level to strengthen triangulation (see Data Collection Sources and Techniques section).

Data Collection Sources and Techniques

Primary data was obtained through in-depth semi-structured interviews with four informants. The three core informants in the case came from the UKPBJ environment: (1) Head of the Goods and Services Procurement Section as the initiator, (2) implementation staff as technical operators, and (3) functional procurement officials as daily implementers and forum resource persons - all three of whom were part of a total of 15 employees (10 civil servants and 5 PPPK) within the UKPBJ who were directly involved in the management of Ngofa Sedano. The fourth informant is the Head of the Research and Innovation Division of the Regional Planning, Development, Research and Innovation Agency (Bapperida) as the architect of regional innovation policy at the macro level, whose function is to provide a broader institutional context and external validation of findings at the case level.

This variation in informant positions across the micro (innovation implementer) and macro (policy formulator) levels provides a stronger triangulation of sources for the phenomenon under study. Secondary data in the form of regulatory and budget documents is used as a triangulation method: Mayor's Regulation Number 50 of 2022 concerning Regional Innovation, Regional Secretary Decree Number 5.4 of 2024 concerning the Ngofa Sedano Management Team, Standard Operating Procedure Number 86/SOP/UKPBJ-TK/2023, Budget Implementation Document (DPA) for the Procurement of Goods/Services for the period 2023–2024, as well as support data for internal beneficiaries UKPBJ. Triangulation of this document especially strengthens the validity of the findings in the analysis of adaptation dimensions.

Data Analysis Techniques

Data analysis was carried out thematically with a combination of deductive, coding interview transcripts into three categories of resilience stages (anticipation, coping, adaptation) as an initial and inductive coding framework to capture themes that emerged from the data, especially patterns of resource bricolage. The validity of the data is checked through triangulation of sources and methods, as well as checking rival explanations (Yin, 2018).

Results and Discussion

Anticipation Capability: Reading Opportunities During Crisis

The findings show that the embryo of Ngola Sedano was born from the anticipatory capabilities of the UKPBJ leadership in reading the COVID-19 pandemic situation as an opportunity, not just an obstacle. The three informants consistently confirmed the same starting point from different points of view. Informant 1 (Head of UKPBJ) emphasized that the main motivation was the competency gap, not just the digitalization trend:

"The main problem that we want to solve is the problem of HR competency, especially in procurement actors in the city of Tidore I had an initial idea to make it more efficient, we could get knowledge, but the local government budget would not be drained for trips like that."

Informant 2 (implementing staff) added that this initiative emerged from the bottom before the pandemic crisis peaked:

"It was originally established before Covid, we both took the initiative to utilize digitalization, whether through Zoom, to make our budget related to meetings more efficient."

Meanwhile, Informant 3 (functional procurement staff) explained the external momentum that the leadership read:

"Our leadership saw this as an opportunity to do work more effectively and efficiently without consuming a lot of time, money and energy."

In accordance with the concept of anticipation (Duchek, 2020), namely the ability to observe the environment and identify opportunities proactively before the crisis fully impacts, UKPBJ does not directly apply this forum to external parties. For approximately one-month, internal staff practiced taking turns playing the functions of host, moderator and resource person using a free Zoom account, as stated by Informant 3:

"There was never any instruction, it was purely the idea of the head of the procurement department who saw the potential that procurement could be carried out efficiently and effectively."

This internal readiness then differentiates Ngofa Sedano's launch method from innovations that are immediately introduced to the public without a trial period.

Coping Capability through Resource Bricolage

In the coping dimension, the data shows a pattern of resource bricolage (Baker & Nelson, 2005; Carstensen et al., 2023), namely "creating something from nothing" through the recombination of freely available resources. Informant 1 emphasized their internal working principles:

"We never use the local government budget to study; we do everything independently from free sources available on the internet."

Informant 3 detailed the technical limitations that they worked around, not avoided:

"We just practiced self-taught, because there was no budget for it, because at that time there was efficiency and at that time Zoom was still free, we used it for 30 minutes and there were only 12 or 13 participants."

Bricolage is also visible at the procedural level: Informant 2 explained that Standard Operating Procedure Number 86/SOP/UKPBJ-TK/2023 (Tidore Islands City Goods/Services Procurement Work Unit, 2023) is carried out flexibly, not rigidly, when the situation demands speed:

"We carry out the SOP itself, but sometimes if we need to move quickly, we improvise (don't follow the SOP) sometimes we make it 30 minutes zoom, but when it happens, completed more quickly or in less than 30 minutes."

This bricolage tendency is not simply a choice of work style, but is also driven by the design of the regulation itself: Perwali Number 50 of 2022 Article 30 paragraph (2) (Tidore Islands Mayor Regulation Number 50 of 2022) confirms that if the budgeted innovation activities are declared unsuccessful, the budget allocation will not be provided in the following year a mechanism that structurally creates budget vulnerability and makes a bricolage strategy that does not depend on formal budgets a step that is economically feasible. adaptive structural, not just a choice of work style.

This capability is also what maintains the sustainability of the forum amidst the pressure of national spending efficiency policies (Instruction of the President of the Republic of Indonesia Number 1 of 2025): the intensity of activities decreased in 2026, but did not stop completely, as Informant 1 admitted:

"The beginning of 2026 it was not as smooth as in previous years, but it definitely wasn't as smooth and massive as in previous years."

Even though work patterns are slightly adjusted due to national policies in 2026, work practices and work patterns are still maintained in the organization, only the time and intensity are changed according to field conditions, this then produces coping capabilities that maintain its continuity.

Adaptation Capability: Institutionalization and Functional Expansion

The dimension of adaptation is evident in the formalization process of Ngofa Sedano. Informant 1 identified the legal basis as a "Mayor's Decree" (Mayoral Decree), noting:

"First, the regulation for Ngofa Sedano originated from the Mayor's Decree; second, the internal personnel involved already possess a solid understanding of how to implement Ngofa Sedano."

Triangulation with documents obtained by the researcher reveals greater precision: while the general legal framework for the regional innovation was indeed established via Mayor of Tidore Islands Regulation Number 50 of 2022, the specific appointment of the Ngofa Sedano operational management team was set forth in the Decree of the Regional Secretary of Tidore Islands City Number 5.4 of 2024 (Regional Secretariat of Tidore Islands City, 2024a). Additionally, Standard Operating Procedure Number 86/SOP/UKPBJ-TK/2023 (Procurement Unit of Tidore Islands City, 2023) was ratified by the Regional Secretary, citing legal grounds that include Law Number 25 of 2009 on Public Services, Presidential Regulation Number 12 of 2021 on Government Procurement of Goods/Services, and Regulation of the Minister of

Administrative and Bureaucratic Reform (PANRB) Number 35 of 2012 on Guidelines for Drafting Government Administration SOPs.

This operational-level distinction specifically the use of a Regional Secretary's Decree rather than a direct Mayor's Decree represents an official legal instrument issued within the scope of authority delegated by the Mayor via Mayor Regulation Number 50 of 2022. Consequently, it does not alter the substantive finding that Ngofa Sedano has been formally institutionalized; rather, it illustrates the value of document triangulation in refining the precision of informant recollections. This formalization aligns with the classic argument that a higher degree of institutionalization fosters generational uniformity in understanding among participants and creates resistance to change (Zucker, 1977; Pradana et al., 2023) specifically, resilience against leadership turnover or staff rotations. Informant 3 explicitly confirmed this when asked about potential leadership changes:

“The structure might change, but the Ngofa Sedano work spirit has become a hallmark of the UKPBJ, so we do not rely on the leadership.”

Adaptation is also reflected in the gradual expansion of the forum’s scope: evolving from an internal UKPBJ forum to one that spans various Regional Apparatus Organizations (OPD) and includes MSMEs mentored by the Department of Industry, Trade, and Cooperatives, as well as featuring guest speakers from different regencies/cities and professional associations like IAPI. A pattern of tiered succession was also observed, as explained by Informant 1:

“When new employees join, seniors mentor the juniors; we place trust in them for instance, if they lack full competency yet, we might first entrust them with the role of moderator.”

This was confirmed by Informant 2 regarding current practices:

“We happen to have newly recruited PPPK (Government Employees with Work Agreements) staff here, so upon joining, they immediately receive training on the Ngofa Sedano innovation.”

The most advanced form of adaptation is evident in the plan to evolve the dialogue forum into a digital data-exchange platform an initiative already being pioneered independently by internal staff without waiting for a specific budget allocation. Informant 3 stated:

“There is a colleague within the UKPBJ who a digital expert is and is currently developing an application to support the Ngofa Sedano platform... while the Ngofa Sedano forum currently facilitates the transfer of knowledge and information, in the future, it could potentially expand to include data transfer.”

The Budget Implementation Document (DPA) for the Goods/Services Procurement Division further confirms this bricolage pattern at the budgetary level: while the total ceiling for supporting sub-activities (including Electronic Procurement Service Management) grew from IDR 231,619,200 in 2023 (Tidore Kepulauan City Regional Secretariat, 2022) to IDR 391,242,200 in 2024 (Tidore Kepulauan City Regional Secretariat, 2024b), the specific cost for the Zoom hosting service the technical backbone of Ngofa Sedano remained relatively stable and even decreased slightly, dropping from IDR 4,282,000 (2023) to IDR 3,500,000 (2024–2025). This pattern reinforces the bricolage argument with greater precision: institutional support grew regarding broader supporting infrastructure, whereas the specific tool underpinning Ngofa Sedano remained low-cost and never became a budgetary burden, even as the scope of its activities continued to expand. Supporting documentation from the UKPBJ also records the forum's cumulative reach, encompassing 343 individuals across

various categories ranging from procurement practitioners in regional government agencies, districts, sub-districts, and villages, as well as Regional Secretariat divisions, to business entities (Procurement of Goods and Services Division of the Tidore Islands City Regional Secretariat, 2024). This scope far exceeds the UKPBJ's internal audience at the time the forum was first initiated. The cumulative impact of these three capabilities is also reflected in procurement performance outcomes: in addition to a surge in e-purchasing transactions rising from approximately 30 to over 1,700 packages the UKPBJ secured ministerial incentives totaling roughly IDR 11 billion over the last two years (2022–2023). Informant 3 directly attributed this success to the role of Ngofa Sedano as a "catalyst for acceleration." Such post-experience learning (Duchek, 2020) strengthens organizational capacity to withstand future shocks including the staff rotations and leadership changes common in bureaucracies, as well as massive, nationwide budget cuts and efficiency drives.

External Validation and Macro Context: Bapperida's Perspective

Triangulation with Informant 4 at the macro policy level also strengthens the validity of the findings at the case level. Informant 4 confirmed the external legitimacy of Ngofa Sedano as the chosen innovation to represent the City of Tidore Islands at the national level Innovative Government Award (IGA), while highlighting the extraordinary efficiency behind it: "with very modest capital... it finally reached the LKPP level recognizing that Tidore has extraordinary speed" in preparing procurement plans, far ahead of many other regions that are still waiting for technical guidance. This recognition from the Government Goods/Services Procurement Policy Institute (LKPP) is a form of external validation that is independent of the claims of the key informants in the case. More importantly, Informant 4 independently confirmed the general pattern of failure experienced by many other digital innovations in Tidore Islands City, as he said:

"Digital innovation, on average, is hampered by payment for packages and applications as well as website or hosting subscriptions, because in the field because you can no longer pay, the innovation can no longer run."

This statement generalizes the failure mechanisms found at the single case level to broader patterns in the regional innovation ecosystem, while emphasizing why Ngofa Sedano's strategy of free resource bricolage is not a coincidence, but rather a structurally crucial differentiating factor. Informant 4 also reflectively acknowledged the limitations of the current innovation evaluation system, which echoes de Vries, Bekkers, and Tummers' (2016) criticism of the dominance of adoption stage studies over sustainability:

"We don't need to worry about administrative issues but rather focus on the impact of the innovation there are administrative ones, but we are optimistic that we will make them first and then test them in stages."

This convergence between the reflections of local policy actors and the international public sector innovation literature strengthens the relevance of this article's contribution both empirically and theoretically.

At a higher institutional level, Informant 4 also revealed that the current legal umbrella for the 227 regional innovations is still in the form of "umbrella decree, all mayor's decrees, all one door", this confirms the triangulation of previous documents that the case's core informant's reference to "mayor's decree" represents a general legal umbrella, while the operational implementation of each innovation (including Ngofa Sedano) is regulated in more detail through derivative decisions such as the Regional Secretary's Decree. Informant 4 also revealed that the Draft Regional Regulation on the Implementation of Regional Innovation is in the final

stage of ratification ("the final position has been approved by the DPRD, only the second level of plenary session remains"), which if ratified will strengthen the institutionalization of regional innovation to a higher level of regulation than the Mayor's Regulation.

Interaction of Three Capabilities and Contribution to the Literature

These findings show that the three resilience capabilities do not stand alone, but rather support each other as summarized in Figure 2, explaining that anticipation capability provides the foundation for internal readiness, coping capability ensures operational continuity through bricolage, and adaptation capability maintains long-term sustainability through institutionalization and regeneration. The absence of one of these capabilities in the case of other innovations that failed post-launch also explains why these innovations did not survive, even though they were born from similar isomorphic pressures (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983; Patalon, 2026). Thus, this research explains in detail the procedural mechanisms behind the sustainability of a post-crisis public sector digital innovation, a dimension that has not been touched upon much in the public sector innovation literature which is still focused on the adoption stage (de Vries et al., 2016). As a check on competing explanations (Yin, 2018), researchers considered the possibility that sustainability is driven solely by individual leadership support factors; However, the data shows that all informants emphasized that continuity is guaranteed even if there is a change in leadership, because it is embedded in the SOPs, SKs and collective capacity of staff (Keeley, 2022; Emory & McKinney, 2022; Saulnier, 2024).

Conclusion

This research concludes that the sustainability of Ngofa Sedano's innovation is supported by three interrelated organizational resilience capabilities: (1) anticipatory capability, which can be seen from the leadership's sensitivity to reading efficiency opportunities in the midst of the pandemic crisis and building internal readiness before external launch; (2) coping capabilities through resource bricolage practices self-taught learning, use of free platforms, and rotation of staff roles, which allows innovation to continue even without a special budget and amidst the pressure of national spending efficiency policies; and (3) adaptation capability through formal institutionalization (Regional Secretary Decree and SOP, within the framework of the Regional Innovation Trustee) and tiered regeneration, which maintains sustainability across changes in personnel and leadership. Compared with other public service innovation studies in Indonesia which found a fragile pattern of "personal based innovation", the Ngofa Sedano case shows the opposite pattern as a positive deviant case. Theoretically, this research explains the mechanisms behind the sustainability of a public sector digital innovation that was born from the momentum of the crisis, while filling the gap of post-adoption studies in the public sector innovation literature and enriching the still developing discussion of resilience in public administration.

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