

BUREAUCRACY'S RESPONSIBILITY IN PUBLIC SERVICES (STUDY OF THE REGIONAL DISASTER MANAGEMENT AGENCY (BPBD) OF KUPANG REGENCY)

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Volume: 6

Number: 3

Page: 531 - 543

Article History:

Received: 2025-03-10

Revised: 2025-03-29

Accepted: 2025-05-15

Abstract:

This study aims to analyze the responsiveness of bureaucracy in public services at the Regional Disaster Management Agency (BPBD) of Kupang Regency, especially in responding to community needs during and after a disaster. The primary concern raised is the extent to which BPBD is able to provide services that meet community expectations in emergencies and identify the factors that support and inhibit this. This study employs a qualitative approach, utilizing a case study method. Data collection techniques are carried out through in-depth interviews, direct observation, and documentation studies. Informants were selected purposively, consisting of BPBD officials and residents affected by the disaster. The study focuses on three main aspects: response-ability (officer understanding and clarity of communication), speed of service (utilization of time and technology), and accuracy of service (suitability of services and procedures). The results of the study indicate that flooding is the most dominant and broad-impact event in the study area. Flat topographic factors, infrastructure damage, and inadequate drainage systems cause the vulnerability of this area. Field findings indicate that three main aspects influence the responsiveness of the Kupang Regency BPBD in handling flood disasters: the aspect of response-ability identified limitations in technical understanding among officers due to their low disaster education background and a minimal training budget.

Keywords: Bureaucratic Responsiveness, Public Service, Disaster Management, Kupang Regency

INTRODUCTION

Public services are a manifestation of the state's responsibility to ensure the basic needs and welfare of the community. The quality of public services is a key indicator of government effectiveness, particularly in critical sectors such as education, healthcare, and disaster management. Amidst the increasing risk of disasters due to climate change and ecological pressures, public services in disaster contexts require more attention. In this case, the bureaucracy serves as the primary link between the government and citizens, determining whether the government's response effectively addresses the community's urgent needs during times of crisis (Pareek & Sole, 2022).

The effectiveness of the bureaucracy is determined by its responsiveness, namely the ability to respond to community demands quickly, appropriately, and accurately. Responsiveness reflects the quality of the relationship between the state and its citizens, serving as a measure of the legitimacy of public institutions. Unfortunately, various studies indicate that the responsiveness of the bureaucracy in many regions still faces significant structural obstacles, including complex procedures, limited resource capacity, and inadequate coordination between institutions. This situation has the potential to worsen the impact of disasters, especially in vulnerable areas such as East Nusa Tenggara (NTT). (Takade & Helms, 2006).



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East Nusa Tenggara Province, especially Kupang Regency, is one of the areas with a high disaster risk index. Based on data from the Central Statistics Agency (2024), Kupang Regency recorded the highest frequency of disasters in the province in the period 2021–2023. Incidents such as floods, tornadoes, and landslides have occurred repeatedly, highlighting the weaknesses of the existing disaster mitigation and response system. Major events such as Tropical Cyclone Seroja in 2021 even became a wake-up call to the limitations of local bureaucracy in responding to crises effectively. Responsive bureaucracy in the context of disasters encompasses not only administrative aspects but also concerns the safety of human life and sustainable development. (Saraswati et al., 2021)

Table 1. Number of Natural Disaster Incidents by Regency/City in East Nusa Tenggara Province in 2021-2023

No.	Region (District)	Number of Natural Disasters (2021-2023)		
		Landslide	Flood	Wind
1	East Sumba	1	7	2
2	Kupang	10	20	15
3	Alor	2	6	4
4	Lembata	1	4	4
5	East Flores	2	7	6
6	Sikka	1	6	3
7	Nada	2	2	6
8	Rote Ndao	4	10	11
9	West Manggarai	5	5	1
10	East Manggarai	4	4	0
	Total	32	71	52

Kupang Regency is recorded as the region with the highest frequency of natural disasters in East Nusa Tenggara (NTT), surpassing nine other regencies, including East Sumba, Alor, and East Flores. The dominant types of disasters include landslides, floods, and tornadoes. Landslides occurred 10 times, while floods were recorded 20 times in the last three years – a significant number compared to other regions. The triggers for this disaster include geographical conditions, deforestation, extreme weather events, inadequate drainage systems, and changes in land use. Tornadoes are also a serious threat, with 15 incidents reported in the same period attributed to sudden weather changes resulting from the global climate crisis (Utami, 2019).

The high frequency of disasters places Kupang Regency in a vulnerable position and demands a systematic increase in disaster management capacity. The local government, especially through the Regional Disaster Management Agency (BPBD), is required to strengthen coordination, mitigation, and community preparedness. This aligns with the view (Haddad & Sakr, 2022) that emphasizes the importance of collaboration between bureaucracy and communities in disaster response. Efforts such as disaster training, improving spatial planning, and enhancing infrastructure are strategic steps to mitigate the risks and impacts of natural disasters in this region.

In this context, the responsiveness of the Regional Disaster Management Agency (BPBD) bureaucracy is a major concern. BPBD, as a representative of the regional government in disaster risk management, has a mandate to carry out mitigation, emergency response, and post-disaster recovery in a quick and coordinated manner (Law No. 24 of 2007). However, the extent to which this bureaucratic responsiveness operates optimally has not been specifically studied, especially at the

to the Oesao Dam gate often causes water to overflow into residential areas. Major disasters such as Tropical Cyclone Seroja in April 2021 worsened the situation, damaging residents' homes and infrastructure and claiming lives. The government distributed aid funds worth IDR 177.48 billion to 10,620 families based on the results of damage verification, with disbursement mechanisms through BRI and assistance from the BPBD. BPBD data recorded that flooding was the most dominant disaster in Naibonat over the last two years, affecting a total of 926 families in 2023 and 2024.

The flood problem is exacerbated by the shallowing and narrowing of water channels, the accumulation of garbage, and changes in land use that reduce the water's absorption capacity. In addition, inadequate drainage infrastructure and the potential for tidal flooding, exacerbated by the area's proximity to the coastline, further worsen the situation. High rainfall during the rainy season increases water discharge that cannot be accommodated by existing channels, resulting in widespread waterlogging. Therefore, adaptive spatial planning, increased drainage capacity, and community participation in maintaining environmental cleanliness are needed to minimize the risk of flooding (BPBD Kupang Regency, 2024).

Table 2. Summary of Disaster Data by Type in 2023-2024

No	Type of Disaster	Number of Families Affected Per Year		Number of Families Affected Per Year	Information
		2023	2024		
1	Flood	461	465	926	Logistics distribution has been done
2	Whirlwind	41	44	85	Logistics distribution has been done
3	Landslide	7	9	16	Logistics distribution has been done
4	Earthquake	43	0	43	Logistics distribution has been done
5	Fire	32	23	55	Logistics distribution has been done
TOTAL		584	541	1.125	

Source: BPBD Kupang Regency, 2025

Based on the table data above from the Kupang Regency BPBD (2025), it was recorded that throughout the 2023-2024 budget year, a total of 1,125 Heads of Families (KK) were affected by various types of disasters in the area. Floods were the most dominant disaster, with a total of 926 KK affected, followed by tornadoes (85 KK), fires (55 KK), earthquakes (43 KK), and landslides (16 KK). Logistics distribution has been carried out for all types of disasters as part of the local government's emergency response efforts. These data indicate that flooding remains the primary threat in Kupang Regency, underscoring the need for continuous improvement in risk management and disaster mitigation.

To find out more about the research problem, it will be explained in the focus and sub-focus sections. This description is based on data obtained through interviews, observations, and the distribution of questionnaires to BPBD Kupang Regency employees and the community receiving services. With this approach, the analysis of bureaucratic responsiveness is divided into specific aspects that facilitate the identification of strengths and weaknesses in public service practices carried out by BPBD, particularly in responding to emergencies caused by flooding.

Ability to Respond; Officer Understanding. Officer understanding is a fundamental aspect in forming bureaucratic responsiveness, especially in the context of disaster management. According to Weber (1922), the effectiveness of the bureaucracy is largely determined by the apparatus' understanding of the tasks, functions, and organizational structure. This is reinforced by Herbert A. Simon (1957) stated that officer understanding is not only related to administrative



implementation but also the ability to make rational decisions amidst limited information and resources.

The results of the study conducted by the Kupang Regency BPBD showed that the understanding of officers still needs improvement, both through training and disaster education. The Head of the Kupang Regency BPBD explained that this institution had made various efforts, including the formation and training of disaster-resilient villages in 2022 and 2023. However, the implementation of this program is still constrained by budget limitations and the distribution of workers who do not match their expertise.

This condition was clarified by the Head of the Prevention and Preparedness Section, who stated that training for officers was carried out with limitations. Some disaster personnel were even transferred to become treasurers or operators rather than being assigned to technical disaster management tasks. This limitation is also reflected in the disaster mitigation training budget data, which is only IDR 24,000,000 (Twenty-Four Million Rupiah) in 2023 and will increase to IDR 50,000,000 (Fifty Million Rupiah) in 2024, an amount that is still relatively minimal to support the strengthening of Human Resources (HR) capacity as a whole.

In addition, the Head of the Rehabilitation and Reconstruction Division emphasized that most of the State Civil Apparatus (ASN) and Non-Permanent Employees (PTT) at BPBD do not have an educational background in disaster management. This can be seen from the ASN education data, which shows that only two people hold a Master's degree, while the majority are graduates of S-1 and SLTA/SMK. Of the 35 PTT personnel, most are also not disaster graduates, and only 9 people have an S1 education.

This condition has an impact on the limited technical knowledge and readiness of officers in dealing with disasters, including in Naibonat Village, which is often affected by floods. Limited budget and human resources are the main obstacles to developing the responsiveness of officers.

This finding is supported by research by Ilsan Masdrian et al. (2022) in Bandung City, which stated that changes and budget limitations, as well as weak competence in planning, also affect the effectiveness of training and disaster management programs.

Clarity of Communication. In an effort to understand the responsiveness of the Kupang Regency BPBD in disaster management, clarity of communication is an important indicator. Referring to the theory of Shannon and Weaver (1949), the clarity of messages greatly determines the effectiveness of receiving information. Carl Rogers (1961) emphasized the importance of honest and open communication in order to elicit the right response in interactions.

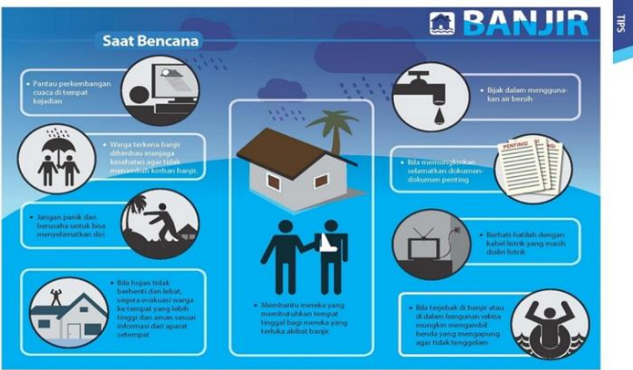
The results of an interview with Esti Gloria Daepanie, Head of the Preparedness Section of the Kupang Regency BPBD (March 18, 2025), revealed that the delivery of information regarding BPBD procedures and services was considered quite effective. This is evidenced by the large number of letters requesting assistance from the public that were received during the disaster, totaling 98 letters (data attached). However, he also noted that delays in sending letters often occurred due to geographical conditions and infrastructure in the area that were difficult to reach.

Strengthened by the statement of Mr. Ferdi Wadu, one of the community members who joined the WhatsApp group Sharing Cepat Info Bencana (March 10, 2025), the presence of the group was considered to facilitate communication between BPBD, village governments, and residents. However, he also highlighted the limitations of the internet network as an obstacle to the rapid dissemination of information, which contributed to the delay in reporting disaster events.

Meanwhile, Mr. Putu Dedi Ariadi, Head of the Logistics Section of the Kupang Regency BPBD (March 29, 2025), said that in the case of flooding in Naibonat Village, the response of officers was

less than optimal. This was triggered by the delay in reports from the public and the number of officers on duty, which was only four people, coupled with limited equipment.

Furthermore, Mr. Smith R.Y. Fanggi, Head of Emergency and Logistics Division of BPBD Kupang Regency (March 10, 2025), explained that coordination between agencies is carried out through the Decree of the Regent of Kupang, namely the Decree of SIAGA, Decree of TANGGAP, and Decree of the Hydrometeorological Disaster Management Post. The Decree is issued periodically during the rainy season based on the release from the BMKG of East Nusa Tenggara Province to ensure cross-sectoral preparedness in dealing with disasters.



Source: BPBD Kupang Regency, 2025
Figure 1. Early Warning System for Flood Disasters

The image above shows the early warning system implemented in handling flood disasters in Kupang Regency. This system serves as an early detection tool to identify potential flooding, enabling the Kupang Regency BPBD and the local community to take prompt mitigation and evacuation measures. The Kupang Regency BPBD communication system is also supported by the dissemination of early warning information through various media, such as HT radio, WhatsApp groups, and village loudspeakers. This system facilitates early detection of potential flooding and encourages rapid mitigation steps from the community and BPBD.

This finding aligns with Minarni Tolapa's (2021) research at the Gorontalo City BPBD, which shows that media-based communication strategies, instructional design, and participatory approaches can increase the effectiveness of disaster information dissemination. Likewise, Ahmad Syarif and Andi Alimuddin's (2022) research in Makassar City highlights the importance of coordination, integration, and synchronization in disaster management policy communication, which still requires improvement to be more effective.

Thus, clear communication both between institutions and between BPBD and the community plays a crucial role in increasing the ability to respond to disasters in Kupang Regency. Although there are adequate communication systems and channels, challenges such as late reporting, network limitations, and lack of personnel still need to be addressed in efforts to improve disaster communication governance in the future.

Speed of Service; Time. The responsiveness of the bureaucracy in flood disaster services at the Kupang Regency BPBD is greatly influenced by the speed of service, which is determined by the availability of adequate time and resources. Based on an interview with Smith Robert Y. Fanggi, as Head of Emergency and Logistics (March 11, 2025), the speed of service is highly dependent on the availability of logistics stock. If logistics are available, assistance is distributed immediately, but if stock runs out, distribution is postponed. This is influenced by the limitations of the APBD budget,



Regency BPBD has attempted to provide services that meet the basic needs of the disaster-affected community despite being constrained by limited resources. Head of Emergency and Logistics, Smith Y.R. Fanggi, in an interview on March 19, 2025, stated that the logistical assistance provided consisted of food, drinks, temporary housing, and protection for vulnerable groups, including pregnant women, the elderly, people with disabilities, babies, and toddlers. He added that as long as there were no complaints from the community, the BPBD considered their needs to have been met.

The above view is complemented by the statement of Yeverson Nubatonis, as treasurer of goods, who explained that although the type of assistance was in accordance with the needs of the community, the amount was limited by the capacity of logistics procurement. He provided an example of how the community often hopes for assistance in rebuilding houses after floods, but the BPBD is only able to provide stimulus assistance due to budget and logistical limitations.

To support the statement from the informant, specifically for flood assistance in the Naibonat area, assistance is often distributed in the form of:

Table 3. Data on Logistics Assistance received by victims of the 2023/2024 Flood Disaster

NO	DESCRIPTION	QUANTITY
1.	Rice	10 Kg
2.	Sugar	2 Kg
3.	Coffee	1 Fan
4.	Tea Leaves	2 Boxes
5.	Hock Stove	1 piece
6.	Bath soap	5 pieces
7.	Washing soap (Daia)	1 kg
8.	Plastic bucket	1 piece
9.	Hot cloth	2 pieces
10.	Tarpaulin	1 piece
11.	Plastic mat	2 pieces

Source: BPBD Kupang Regency, 2025

Table 4. Data on building material assistance received by flood disaster victims in 2023/2024

NO	DESCRIPTION	QUANTITY
1.	Zinc	30 sheets
2.	Zinc nails	1 kg
3.	7 cm nails	1 Kg
4.	Wood 6/8 (4 m)	10 sticks

Source: BPBD Kupang Regency, 2025

Supporting data from the Naibonat area shows details of the logistical assistance and building materials distributed, including 10 kg of rice, 2 kg of granulated sugar, stoves, soap, tarpaulins, and various building materials such as zinc, nails, and wood. These data indicate that the type of assistance has been directed at the real needs of the community; however, the amount is insufficient for the scale of damage and overall needs. This condition aligns with the findings of Qori Febriarta Situmorang's (2024) research in Langkat Regency, which also identified limited resources as the primary obstacle to providing timely and effective services during disasters.

Referring to the theory of Zeithaml et al. (2015), which emphasizes the importance of accuracy and sensitivity in responding to community needs, it can be concluded that although the Kupang Regency BPBD has shown responsive efforts in the suitability of services, there are still gaps that



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need to be addressed to ensure that public services in disaster situations are truly optimal and equitable.

Mechanisms and Procedures. In a study on bureaucratic responsiveness in public services at the Kupang Regency BPBD, particularly with a focus on service accuracy through the sub-focus of mechanisms and procedures, it was found that service effectiveness is largely determined by the clarity of the bureaucratic work structure and the existence of standard procedures. This aligns with Lipsky's view (1980), which emphasizes that responsive public services depend on structured and procedural bureaucratic mechanisms. This study aims to analyze how the mechanisms and procedures implemented by the Kupang Regency BPBD respond to emergencies, especially when flooding occurs in Naibonat Village.

The results of an interview with the Secretary of the Kupang Regency BPBD, Mr. Lemuel Lewan Meru, on March 16, 2025, revealed that although BPBD carries out its main duties and functions in disaster management, until now, it has not had a structured Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) that can be published to the wider community, especially in affected areas such as Naibonat Village.

The absence of this SOP has an impact on the lack of integration within the service system and a decrease in the public's perception of the quality of local government services. Field observations indicate that the flood-affected Naibonat Village community continues to experience dissatisfaction with services, particularly in terms of response time and clarity of procedures carried out by officers. This finding aligns with the results of previous research by Sella Devia Oktaviani (2017) at the Banyumas Regency BPBD, which noted that despite having mechanisms and procedures, their implementation is often hindered by budget and authority limitations.

Referring to the responsiveness theory of Gormley, Hoadley, and Williams (1983), it can be concluded that the lack of synergy between potential, actual responsiveness, and resource commitment is the main cause of weak targeted services. As emphasized by Zeithaml, Parasuraman, and Berry (in Agus Dwiyanto, 2006), low responsiveness occurs when services are not aligned with community needs. This is an important indicator for the Kupang Regency BPBD to immediately improve its mechanisms and procedures in order to enhance accountability and the quality of public services in the future.

Table 5. Supporting and Inhibiting Factors of BPBD Kupang Regency's Responsiveness in Public Services

No	Research Focus	Research Sub Focus	Supporting Factors	Inhibiting Factors
1	Ability to Respond	1. Officer Understanding	1. Implementation of the program for the formation and training of resilient villages (2022–2023) 2. Institutional awareness of the importance of increasing the capacity of officers	1. Limited training budget 2. The distribution of personnel does not match the expertise 3. Lack of human resources with a disaster background 4. The majority of ASN/PTT are non-disaster
		2. Clarity of Communication	1. Open communication between BPBD and the community through various media such as WhatsApp groups, HT radio, and village loudspeakers 2. Formal coordination through the Regent's Decree (SIAGA,	1. Delays in sending aid letters due to geographical conditions and difficult access to infrastructure in affected areas 2. Limited internet networks, especially in remote areas, slow down emergency communications



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No	Research Focus	Research Sub Focus	Supporting Factors	Inhibiting Factors
2	Speed of Service	1. Time	<p>tanggap, POSKO), which strengthens communication between institutions</p> <p>3. High community participation in submitting requests for assistance proves that the communication system is running</p> <p>4. BMKG's technology and information-based early warning system support community and BPBD readiness</p> <p>Availability of Adequate Logistics Stock</p>	<p>3. The very limited number of on-duty officers (only four people) makes it difficult to provide fast service during a disaster</p> <p>4. Lack of communication tools and personnel causes coordination and responses to community reports to be suboptimal</p>
		2. Use of Technology	<p>Availability of one Warning Receiver System unit from BMKG NTT</p>	<p>1. Shrinking Operational Budget</p> <p>2. Outdated and Frequently Broken Operational Vehicles</p> <p>3. Poor Infrastructure and Terrain Conditions</p> <p>1. Only able to detect earthquakes (does not cover floods)</p> <p>2. Reliance on traditional warnings (pamphlets, manual loudspeakers)</p>
3	Accuracy of Service	1. Suitability of Services	<p>1. Commitment of field officers: Attention to vulnerable groups (pregnant women, babies, elderly, disabled)</p> <p>2. Data on logistical assistance (rice, stoves, mats, tarpaulins, etc.) and building materials (zinc, wood) show that the types of goods are in accordance with basic post-disaster needs.</p> <p>3. As long as there are no complaints received, BPBD assumes that assistance has been tepat sasaran</p>	<p>1. Budget and logistics constraints</p> <p>2. Needs assessments are still based on complaints, not the results of comprehensive assessments or actual needs surveys.</p> <p>3. The scale of damage is greater than the assistance available</p>
		2. Mechanisms and Procedures	<p>Although there is no formal Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) yet, BPBD has carried out its functional role in handling disasters, indicating that a basic work structure is in place.</p>	<p>1. The absence of documented and published Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs).</p> <p>2. The absence of Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) hampers coordination and integration between the sectors involved in emergency response.</p>

CONCLUSION

Based on the research results on bureaucratic responsiveness in public services by the Kupang Regency BPBD, particularly in handling flood disasters in Naibonat Village, it can be concluded that



the agency's response still faces various fundamental challenges in terms of human resources, institutional capacity, and communication and service systems. The most significant weakness lies in the officers' limited technical understanding, resulting from their minimal disaster education background and limited training budget. On the other hand, although an early warning system and digital communication channels are available, network limitations and delays in public reports also hinder the effectiveness of the response. Efforts, such as disaster-resilient village training and cross-agency coordination through the Siaga SK, have shown positive initiatives but are still unable to keep pace with the increasing complexity of flood risks. Therefore, comprehensive and sustainable improvements are necessary for the institutional, communication, and personnel preparedness aspects so that the bureaucracy can respond quickly, appropriately, and adaptively to the dynamics of hydrometeorological disasters.

Structured Human Resource Capacity Improvement. Local governments need to allocate a more adequate budget for competency-based disaster education and training. The recruitment and placement of technical personnel must also consider their academic background and experience in the field of disaster management.

Optimization of Communication Systems and Information Technology. The expansion of internet network access, the provision of alternative communication devices, and technical training for the community in the use of early warning systems will enhance the effectiveness of delivering information and reporting disasters in real time.

Strengthening Cross-Sector Coordination. BPBD needs to strengthen synergy with related OPDs, village officials, and local volunteer groups through routine coordination forums and updates of the Alert Decree based on the latest risk data. This is important so that disaster responses do not run sectorally but rather integratively.

Preparation of Disaster Risk-Based Spatial Planning. The Kupang Regency Government needs to integrate flood mitigation into its spatial planning and regional development policies, including the protection of water catchment areas, river normalization, and the development of drainage infrastructure that is adaptive to climate change.

Encouraging Community Participation in Disaster Risk Reduction. Increasing disaster literacy through public education, evacuation simulations, and community involvement in early detection systems is a crucial step in fostering a culture of alertness and responsiveness to the threat of flooding.

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