

Cultural-Value-Based Bureaucratic Reform in North Halmahera Regency

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Abstract. Researches on bureaucratic reform based on cultural value (cultural approach) are rarely found. In fact, the combining use of structural and cultural approaches in government bureaucratic reform can be expected to encourage the achievement of bureaucratic reform objectives. This study chose the location in North Halmahera Regency, where the community still uphold the cultural values as represented in its cultural symbol of “Hibua Lamo.” The research uses a qualitative method and the technique of content analysis. “Hibua Lamo” gives birth to various cultural values and social norms that are formally enacted, putting “Hibua Lamo” into a pattern of organization in society and government. The Regent of North Halmahera implemented a bureaucratic reform in his local governance based on the considerations of balance between “institutional power” according to legislation and social norms institutionalized in “Hibua Lamo”. The combined consideration of balance between the legislation and the institutionalized social norms made the Regent of North Halmahera capable to implement the policies of bureaucratic reform in North Halmahera, thereby building an efficient, effective and well-performed bureaucracy as well as reducing poverty from 57.16% to 9.97%, increasing annual per capita income of about 30%, and encouraging economic growth in North Halmahera Regency approximately 6.04%.

Keywords: bureaucratic reform, cultural values, social norms, *hibua lamo*

Abstrak. Penelitian tentang reformasi birokrasi berbasis pada nilai-nilai budaya (pendekatan budaya) masih jarang ditemukan. Padahal, perpaduan pendekatan struktural dan budaya dalam reformasi birokrasi pemerintahan bisa diharapkan mendorong pencapaian tujuan reformasi birokrasi. Penelitian ini memilih lokasi di Kabupaten Halmahera Utara, dimana masyarakatnya masih sangat menjunjung tinggi nilai-nilai budaya yang tersimpul dalam simbol budaya “Hibua Lamo”, dengan menggunakan metode kualitatif dan teknik analisis isi. Dalam “Hibua Lamo” lahir berbagai nilai-nilai budaya dan norma-norma sosial yang secara formal diberlakukan, menempatkan “Hibua Lamo” menjadi pola pengaturan dalam kehidupan masyarakat dan pemerintahan. Bupati Kabupaten Halmahera Utara dalam penyelenggaraan reformasi birokrasi pemerintahan daerahnya berdasarkan pertimbangan keseimbangan “kekuasaan kelembagaan” menurut peraturan perundang-undangan dengan norma-norma sosial yang melembaga pada “Hibua Lamo”. Perpaduan pertimbangan keseimbangan antara peraturan perundang-undangan dengan norma-norma sosial yang telah melembaga menjadikan Bupati Halmahera Utara mampu mengimplementasikan berbagai kebijakan reformasi birokrasi Kabupaten Halmahera Utara sehingga terbangun birokrasi yang efisien, efektif dan berkinerja serta mampu menurunkan penduduk miskin dari 57,16% menjadi 9,97%, meningkatkan pendapatan perkapita pertahun masyarakat sekitar 30%, serta mendorong pertumbuhan ekonomi Kabupaten Halmahera Utara sekitar 6,04%.

Kata kunci: reformasi birokrasi, nilai-nilai budaya, norma-norma sosial, *hibua lamo*

INTRODUCTION

Reform is born when anomalies occur, where various theories are no longer able to solve the problems arising in the life of society, nation and state. This is caused by a change in the paradigm of thinking, due to speed the science and technological development that are no longer significant with the realities of life. The getting global reality of life and the rapid demands of democracy, decentralization, human rights encourage a reform capable to put an end to authoritarian rule in Indonesia.

In politics and government, particularly in the aspect of governmental organization (bureaucracy) also revolved a “bureaucratic reform,” aiming at building an efficient, effective, accountable and well-performed bureaucracy,

providing excellent public services. To achieve these objectives, the government has formulated various policies set out in the form of legislations, among others, the Regulation of the State Minister for Administrative Reform No. 15/M.PAN/7/2008 on the General Guidelines for Bureaucratic Reforms; the Presidential Decree No. 81 of 2010 concerning the Grand Design of Bureaucratic Reform; the Regulation of the State Minister for Administrative and Bureaucratic Reform No. 20 of 2010 on the Road Map of Bureaucratic Reform; and various other legal products.

Based on the legislation, then various bureaucratic reform strategy were drafted, starting from organizational, managerial to human resources restructuring. It turns out, however, the achievements of bureaucratic reform

objectives still has not met the expectations. The performance of public service bureaucracy still triggers complaints in society. Hence a radical change to fix it is required.

Therefore we need a change through a bureaucratic reform that is significant to public demands, as pointed out by Muslim and Hariyati (2012), stating that "Reform is a renewal process undertaken in a gradual and sustainable manner, so that it does not include any effort and/or action that is radical and revolutionary". However, the reform is not only planned rationally, mechanistically and normatively procedural, but it is also based on cultural values whose existence is diverse and supported by basic norms (Pancasila values) in the life of society, nation and state.

The bureaucratic reform based on cultural values is important since according to Lucian Pye in Alfian (1991), in his research on Burma, cultural elements are the most important and primary variable in understanding the political developments in Burma. His basic conclusion is that attitudes and values play a role in the development of an advanced political system in Burma. Similarly, Fred W. Riggs (1994) developed a typology of bureaucracy based on the level of social development, in which elements of the local culture is crucial.

In addition, according to Kiggundu (2002), "... the application of the Weberian principles is in conflict with the prevailing norms of behavior both within, the targeted organization and wider society, bureaucracy will not lead to the expected benefit". The existence of a complex society with a constantly evolving social-cultural system should be taken into consideration in the reform process. Therefore, the bureaucratic reform, tending to base on the consideration of structural approach, needs to be complemented by considerations based on approach to culture or cultural values.

The combination of both approaches can be understood in the implementation of bureaucratic reform in North Halmahera Regency, selected for the research location. The Regent of North Halmahera implemented his bureaucratic reform policy based on the consideration of balance between institutional "power" according to the formal legislation and social norms institutionalized in "Hibua Lamo" as a preserved cultural institution whose values are still enacted. This approach is significantly relevant with the demands implied by the Law on Local Government that provides an opportunity for local governments to come up with a pattern of organization and public service in accordance with the preserved cultural values in their social life, the values adhered to since it can organize human life both as individuals and as members of society.

Based on the approach outlined above, the Regent of North Halmahera in the first period of his leadership 2006 - 2010 was able to control the number of poor people from 57.16% to 9.99% of the population. He was also able to increase the annual per capita income of the people from IDR 2,368,130,- into IDR 3,005,053,- or an increase of approximately 30% (Namotemo: 2010).

RESEARCH METHODS

This research uses qualitative methods through literature and documents study, observation, in-depth interviews, and focus group discussions. The data analysis technique used is content analysis both on secondary and primary data. The location selected for the research is North Halmahera, an area whose people still uphold their cultural values, reflected in a cultural symbol of "Hibua Lamo".

The key informants in this study consisted of the Regent, Deputy Regent and Secretary of North Halmahera Regency, the Head and Secretary of the Regional House of Representatives (DPRD) of North Halmahera, the Heads of Parliament of North Halmahera, religious leaders, traditional chiefs and community organizations, the Heads of Governmental Division, the Heads of Department, Agency and Office, the Head of the Regency Court of North Halmahera, the Heads of State Prosecutor of North Halmahera and the Head of North Halmahera Regency Police Force.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The bureaucratic reform in North Halmahera was initialized by determining the values dimension as the basis of people's consensus to bureaucracy and to authorial organizers of the local government to conduct transformation of cultural values preserved in the community. The transformation of cultural values as the organizational basis of bureaucratic reform is the values of the various dimensions, i.e. cultural and social dimension, Pancasila and the ideals embodied in the cultural symbol of "Hibua Lamo".

For the community of North Halmahera, Hibua Lamo is seen as a medium used to discuss issues related to the common interests of the community, nation, and state. From "Hibua Lamo", various social consensus, social norms in governance, development and public service are born. The social norms formally and institutionally imposed in the community put "Hibua Lamo" into an organizing pattern in public life and government. Logically then it is from "Hibua Lamo" that the consensus in governance, development and public service come. The consensus of the people (community) through a social contract, as befits a social contract theory of the occurrence of a State according to Thomas Hobbes (in Ali, et al.: 2013).

The institution of "Hibua Lamo", as the one giving birth to the social contract in many aspects in North Halmahera, is one of many other local customary laws in the Unitary State of the Republic Indonesia, as identified by Van Vollenhoven (in Ali, et al.: Ibid) having 21 areas of customary laws (adatrechtkringen), that has similar institutional structure, yet with diverse notations and different imposing powers.

The cultural institutionalization under the "Hibua Lamo", as well as the institutionalized social norms, were used by North Halmahera Regent as the regulatory

pattern of bureaucratic reform through his policy to be implemented through the transformation of values in multiple dimensions (in-depth interview with Local Secretary, 2012).

Transformation of social norms, by the Regent of North Halmahera was expected to influence, shape the behavior of the bureaucrats through the reform undertaken. In an effort to reform the bureaucracy in North Halmahera governance, the Regent with his leadership implement the social norms, institutionalized culturally in “Hibua Lamo”, through the concept of “balance” both internally in his bureaucratic environment and externally in social environment (Interview with the Regent, 2012).

The principle of social norms that are institutionalized in “Hibua Lamo” are among others (Ali, et al.: Ibid): 1) sincerity, i.e. the call of conscience for people, members of Hibua Lamo to do something with pleasure and purity to achieve better goals; 2) Honesty, i.e. a matter of conscience for the people joining in Hibua Lamo to do something right and forthright for what is fitting; 3) Humility i.e. a call for people, members of Hibua Lamo, to behave modestly, unselfishly; and sincerely accept something that deserve to be appreciated; 4) fondness i.e. the mood of the people joining Hibua Lamo to help others as well as aware to protect and preserve the natural environment; 5) Kinship i.e. a form of public attitudes incorporated in Hibua Lamo to mutually accept and appreciate differences in a togetherness.

Bureaucracy is an institution born of a complex social process (Setiyono: 2004), thus the enactment of social norm principle institutionalized in “Hibua Lamo” can easily be done through the authority of the Regent, in providing direction, solicitation, guidance and command both formally and informally in terms of performing the functions of public service and empowerment. This is also consistent with the view of Weber in (Albrow: 1989) that bureaucracy is a social mechanism that maximizes the efficiency so that the principle of social norms can be implemented.

The enactment of social norms principle, institutionalized in the “Hibua Lamo”, begins with the Regent’s policy to build a North Halmahera Regent office-building by referring to the custom/traditional home design of Hibua Lamo (literally means “shared house”) in the form of octagon (8 corners) with the entrances heading to the four cardinal directions, namely the east, west, north and south entrances. This suggests that the Regent’s Office as the center of governmental bureaucracy activities is open to inputs from all layers of society and provides public services without distinguishing people’s background. The policy is also followed by the setting of “Hibua Lamo” as the symbol of the North Halmahera area, which means the determination to be one unified community to embody the spirit of togetherness, harmony of religious and social life for the welfare of society. Therein lies the importance of the bureaucracy as a means of innovation of social policies implementation (Blau: 1987) to prosper the society.

Moreover, the bureaucratic reform in North Halmahera was done through the transformation of the organizing

pattern of cultural values, institutionalized in Hibua Lamo (Papilaya: 2010) i.e.: First, the value of affection or the local concept of O’Dora-O’Hayani, i.e. an expression of affection, often expressed by singing lelehe, a meaningful expression of affection or blessed. Lelehe can be sung at the official ceremony, harvest, and as entertainment for families who are in grief. O’Dora is also meant O’Hayangi, meaning an affectionate and compassionate livelihood. On the basis of these values, when the bureaucrats carry out their duties and functions, without being forced they will always act and think in the attitude of affection and compassion, both when interacting among bureaucrats and when dealing with the public.

Second, the value of truth and justice, or the local concept of O’Banari-O’Adili, the value coming from social norms institutionalized in “Hibua Lamo”, i.e. the full and total comprehension of truth. Something true is true, and vice versa, something wrong is wrong. This value is the embodiment of cultural values understood by the ancestors in North Halmahera: people would not take any goods or harvest crops such as coconuts, yams, bananas, timber, boards, and so on, if they were not theirs. For the people of North Halmahera, such value is maintained; the Regent viewed it as a fundamental instrument that can form the desired behavior of bureaucrats, according to North Halmahera government’s vision and mission. The application of this cultural values by the Regent is easy to do, because the government bureaucracy of North Halmahera is an integral part of the community of North Halmahera. The cultural values used as a model by the bureaucrats in the execution of their duties and functions will be accepted by the public as the party served and empowered.

Third, the value of sincerity and concern, or the local concept of “O’Tiai-O’Baliara, i.e. an expression of sincerity, earnestness towards interests, that is a propriety to do something selfless. The value of sincerity contains a responsibility to do the job, i.e. sincerity of a person or group of people to conduct something good not because of wanting to get a credit or compliments, but because of sheer impulse of the human heart to do something good and beneficial for all human life and the natural surroundings. While the value of O’Baliara is an expression of solidarity, a care for others. This concern is manifested in social activities such as marriage, opening new land, build a house, or in situations of grief. Both of these values grow from the habits of the community when interact with each others. The value growing as a habit, seen and felt by the public, will bear the attitudes and actions that favor others; thus worth pursuing and eventually becomes a custom. By the Regent of North Halmahera, this values are considered very relevant to the duties and functions of the bureaucracy as a public servant, as a public servant. As such, they are used as the basic value in the services provided by the bureaucrats.

Fourth, the value of partnership or the local concept of “O’Doomu” i.e. an order of a society that prioritizes communion or unity for the Hibua Lamo. Communion is manifested in the celebration events, where all family members gather and prepare for the event together. The

main value that is most meaningful for the people is when they get together and eat together, intimate, based on the values of brotherhood. Such value is used as the basis for unifying the community life of North Halmahera that consists of several distinct "kukuban hukum" and different beliefs and religious affiliations, in one unified environment of Hibua Lamo customary law, the unity of the cultural environment of North Halmahera. This is used as an instrument of unifying society based on kinship, a true kinship. The Regent of North Halmahera build a shared perception based on cultural values of Hibua Lamo that emphasize compassion, caring, sincerity, fairness and righteousness in the devotion as a bureaucratic apparatus who bears the tasks and functions in governance, development and public service. Hibua Lamo, actually has a function: (1) as a venue for traditional meeting or local ceremony; (2) as a unifying spirit for each child of Negeri Hibua Lamo. The body and the spirit are directed to execute any good intentions for the sake of shared progress and prosperity. Therefore, Hibua Lamo is a unifying, constructive and uniting body and soul for the sake of communal prosperity (Papilaya: Ibid).

North Halmahera Regent's commitment in implementing the cultural values of Hibua Lamo also appears on his policy of "traditional dress" worn by the bureaucrats on certain days (every Wednesday), illustrating the charisma of a leader through the symbols sewn either on its color and ornaments, such as white, red and yellow with the ornaments depicting justice, honesty, truth, care and affection (Local Tourism Agency of North Halmahera).

In terms of structural and bureaucratic processes reforms of North Halmahera Regency, the Regent always consider the actualization of the concept of balance which in essence is "equality and togetherness", while still based on formal rules such as Government Regulation Number 41 Year 2007 on the organizational structure of the regional governments. That is why the bureaucratic organizational structure of North Halmahera Regency Government tends to be flat yet rich in functions, in the sense that there is authorial decentralization to each regional organization that has specific duties and functions; hence the entire governmental, development and public service affairs are accommodated. According to Osborne and Gaebber (1999) a decentralized public bureaucracy makes the hierarchy more flat towards participation and teamwork as well as can quickly respond to the demands of society.

In the recruitment and promotion to fill the bureaucratic structure, in addition to considering the competence and professionalism, The Regent of North Halmahera, also consider the balance of community and region, thereby building togetherness and equality, based on the value of honesty, fairness, caring, righteousness and affection in his devotion as a bureaucratic apparatus in governance, development and public service.

North Halmahera Regent's commitment on the reform process (recruitment and promotion) is shown in his policy on "competency test" of all officials on the entire structure of Local Government bureaucracy in North Halmahera. The results of the test will be

taken into consideration for the Regent and the Ranks Advisory Agency to formulate an advice for an official to be placed in the field appropriate with his competence. The appointment of an official in the Local Government bureaucracy North Halmahera is ultimately decided by the Regent, taken the concept of balance as the philosophical foundation, and the consideration of competence and professionalism as a sociological foundation, as well as Law on State Administration (State Civil Officers) as a juridical foundation.

As for the commitment of North Halmahera Regent, related to external bureaucratic reform, in terms of providing public services, he considers the concept of balance both the balance of regions and communities.

This concept is implemented in policies helping underprivileged people in the program of "House Surgery (renovation)". This program helps underprivileged families to be able to live in a decent house. The program starts from the rural to the urban environment as a form of empathy from the leader to the people. Implementation of this program is based on some policies: first, North Halmahera Regent Decree No. 410/119/HU/2011 on the Establishment of the Committee of Underprivileged Family House Renovation in the North Halmahera Region in the Budget Year of 2011. This policy demonstrates the commitment of North Halmahera Regent who sincerely cares for protecting and improving the life quality of his society and bringing about justice and equitable development. The composition of the committee consists of: (1) the Regent as the person in charge/advisor, (2) the Deputy Regent as the chairperson, (3) the Regional Secretary as the daily executive chairperson, (4) Assistant and Expert Staffs to the Regent as Deputy chairpersons, (5) the Regent's Expert Staff on Economy and Finance as Secretary, (6) Deputy Secretary, (7) Office Head of DPPKAD as Treasurer, (8) Sections Heads. The above-mentioned Decree stated that all costs arising from the issuance of this decree are North Halmahera Regency Budget Year 2011 and other sources that are not binding. As such, this program purely belongs to North Halmahera Regency Government whose operations involve all regional organizations of North Halmahera.

The second policy is the North Halmahera Regent Decree No. 410/169/HU/ 2011 on the Establishment of Rural Development Program Implementation of Underprivileged Family House Self-managed Renovation Activities on the Community Empowerment Board and North Halmahera Rural Government in Fiscal Year 2011. The above-mentioned regulation describes that the rural development program of underprivileged family house renovation activities is a program of the Regional Government of North Halmahera which aims to increase the degree of people's lives through decent housing aid whose construction involves all employees and community participation. The involvement of all bureaucrats is for efficiency of the house construction cost; it is also an efforts to cultivate a sense of caring, sensitivity and social solidarity of the bureaucrats on the lives of rural communities especially for those who are still classified as underprivileged.

Implementation of the program is self-managed on the Community Empowerment Board and Rural (Village)

Government. For the ease of program implementation, the regent established a self-management team consisting of planners, executors, and supervisors involving governmental employees and officials in North Halmahera. Although the implementation is self-managed by using the Regional Budget, it shall refer to the Presidential Decree No. 54 of 2010 on the procurement of goods/services for Government.

Third, the policy in North Halmahera Regent Decree No. 050/215/HU/2011 on the Determination of the Activity Implementation Unit (UPK), as the Distributor of Stimulant Aid of Self-managed Housing, and Village Location of the Aid Recipient Candidate in North Halmahera Regency, Fiscal Year 2011. This Decree also states that North Halmahera also get a self-managed housing stimulant, financed from the State Budget (APBN.P) in 2011. the Regents Decree also serves as the response of North Halmahera Regency Government to continuously administer development programs that is clean from the practice of nepotism, collusion, and corruption.

The policies described above are only the actual bit of measures taken by the Regent of North Halmahera, directly related to the interests and needs of the community. There are still many other policies that have not been described in this paper, such as policies on education, health and infrastructure, all of which were born as the embodiment of North Halmahera Regent’s commitment to implement bureaucratic reform for the establishment of North Halmahera Government bureaucracy that is efficient, effective and productive in organizing governance, development and public service.

Indeed, a variety of measures taken by the Government of North Halmahera regency in its bureaucratic reform is an attempt to actualize his vision. The vision of North Halmahera Regency (RPJMD, 2011-2015) is clearly formulated as follows:

“Halmahera Utara aman, adil, damai dan sejahtera dalam suasana kekeluargaan sejati, maju, dan mampu bersaing dan tetap dalam bingkai Negara Kesatuan Republik Indonesia” (a safe, fair, peaceful and prosperous North Halmahera in the atmosphere of a true family, advanced, and able to compete and remains in the frame of the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia)

This vision of North Halmahera Regency government contains a number of values desired to be actualized, and since the government bureaucracy is the implementer of the vision, under the will of the Regent as the head of North Halmahera Government, as well as its position as an integral part of the community of North Halmahera, and an intact part of Hibua Lamo , then it is a must for the bureaucracy to actualize the whole values in the vision.

The imperative to actualize the vision of North Halmahera Government is something that binds the bureaucracy to manifest the values in their attitude; therefore the values become the bureaucratic ideals dimension to be actualized.

The actualization of the above dimension is the wish to achieve an autonomous community and region of North Halmahera, empowered by social norms and cultural values founded upon the philosophy of Pancasila and

the Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia (UUD 1945), institutionalized not only in attitude but also in the system synergized with the community and other regions; an empowerment with the potential value and nature adorning the Republic of Indonesia, with its national unity (Bhineka Tunggal Ika), one in its diversity, Indonesia Raya, in the midst of international interactions. The cultural values and social norms, institutionalized in Hibua Lamo, are transformed through a pattern of bureaucratic reform in North Halmahera government. If described in terms of a transformation model, it can be shown schematically in figure 1.

The transformation of cultural values and social norms that has been described earlier, contained in the local wisdom symbol of “Hibua Lamo,” which shows the elements of egalitarianism, mutual assistance, democracy and religion, transformed into the governance in North Halmahera Regency.

“Hibua Lamo” is basically a form of local knowledge of society, capable to maintain the harmony of governance. The content of the values in Hibua Lamo is the main capital for the public welfare, also capable to unify different perceptions and opinions, thus bring good governance.

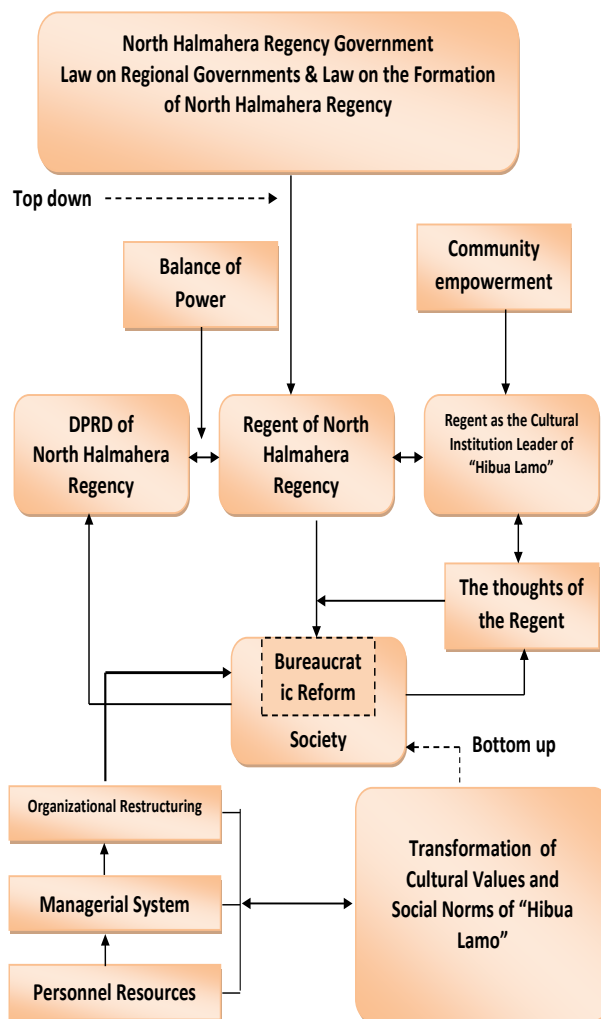


Figure 1. Transformation Model of North Halmahera Regency Government

CONCLUSION

The bureaucratic reform aiming at building an accountable, effective, efficient and well-performed bureaucracy, capable to provide excellent public service, has not actually been as expected. A bureaucratic reform according to the demands of society is still required, a reform of the bureaucracy that does not just rely on “structural approach” on the basis of rational thought, one that is not mechanistic and normative-procedural, but also consider an approach based on cultural values that have been institutionalized in society.

The combination of the two approaches mentioned in bureaucratic reform is expected to encourage the achievement of its objectives. This can be understood on the implementation of bureaucratic reform in North Halmahera Regency, begun with the establishment of values dimension as the basis of social consensus with government bureaucracy. The values transformed as the basic organization of bureaucratic reform are the values that have been institutionalized in the local cultural symbols of “Hibua Lamo”.

“Hibua Lamo” gives birth to social consensus, social norms in governance, development and public service. The social norms formally and institutionally imposed put “Hibua Lamo” into an organizing pattern in public and governmental life. Therefore in organizing the local government bureaucratic reforms, the Regent of North Halmahera founds it upon the balance between institutional “power” based on legislation and social norms institutionalized in “Hibua Lamo”. This condition puts “North Halmahera Regent” in the position of both “the Head of North Halmahera Regency” and the “Leader of Cultural Institution of “Hibua Lamo”.

In such position, the Regent of North Halmahera is able to integrate the balance between the considerations by the legislation, flowing from the top (Top Down) and by social norms, institutionalized in “Hibua Lamo” made up of the community (Bottom Up). The combination of the balance of these considerations makes the Regent of North Halmahera able to implement various policies in North Halmahera Regency bureaucratic reform, so as to encourage economic growth in the region, reaching 6.04% (see 5 Year of Leadership of North Halmahera Regent).

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