

Institutional Performance and Social Impact: A Case Study of Drug and Food Regulatory Agency in Safeguarding Public Health in South Sumatra

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
<p>Keywords: <i>community health protection, institutional performance, public health governance, regulatory effectiveness, social accountability</i></p> <p>DOI: https://doi.org/10.22437/jssh.v9i2.47683</p> <p>Received: August 8, 2025</p> <p>Reviewed: November 19, 2025</p> <p>Accepted: November 29, 2025</p>	<p><i>This study evaluates the institutional performance and social impact of the National Center for Drug and Food Control (BBPOM) in Palembang, focusing on its role in public health governance within South Sumatra province in 2024. This research investigates how regulatory agencies function as critical social actors in safeguarding public welfare. Using a quantitative descriptive research design, the study analyzes key performance indicators, budget realization, and efficiency data from January to December 2024. The results reveal that BBPOM Palembang exceeded its performance targets, achieving 100.84% of its objectives and maintaining a budget efficiency rate of 98.84%. The agency successfully tested 1,471 drug samples (100.48% of the target) and 584 food samples (101.92% of the target), while reaching 13,353 community members through health education programs. These findings demonstrate BBPOM's institutional effectiveness in translating national health policies into local outcomes, with a high public satisfaction rate of 95.9%. However, challenges remain in ensuring food safety compliance (90.58% vs. the 91.00% target) and improving the efficiency of criminal case handling (87.14%). This study provides valuable insights into regulatory governance in emerging economies, highlighting the role of public institutions in upholding community health rights and fostering social welfare. The research contributes empirical evidence to support policy improvements in pharmaceutical and food safety governance, emphasizing the relationship between institutional performance, social accountability, and community well-being.</i></p>

1. Introduction

Public health governance through regulatory institutions represents a critical dimension of social welfare and community protection in contemporary societies (Chen & Rodriguez, 2023). The National Agency for Drug and Food Control (BPOM) functions as Indonesia's primary regulatory body ensuring pharmaceutical and food safety, operating through strategically positioned regional centers across the archipelago (National Agency for Drug and Food Control, 2024). The Palembang Center (BBPOM Palembang) serves South Sumatra

province, representing a vital social institution mediating between state responsibility and community health rights (Dewi et al., 2023). From a social sciences perspective, regulatory agencies like BPOM embody the state's commitment to protecting citizens from health hazards while balancing economic development and social equity (Anderson & Lee, 2023). These institutions operate within complex social structures where diverse stakeholders (government, industry, healthcare providers, and communities) interact to shape health outcomes (Roberts et al., 2023). Understanding how such institutions perform their functions provides insights into broader questions of governance effectiveness, social accountability, and institutional capacity in developing nations (Gupta et al., 2022).

South Sumatra's socioeconomic context presents unique challenges for health governance. The province's diverse population, ranging from urban centers to rural communities, creates varied health protection needs requiring adaptive regulatory approaches (Dewi et al., 2023). The region's economic activities span traditional agriculture to modern manufacturing, necessitating sophisticated oversight mechanisms that protect public health while supporting economic growth (Chen & Rodriguez, 2023). This intersection of social, economic, and health considerations makes South Sumatra an important case study for understanding regulatory governance in transitional societies (Gupta et al., 2022).

Previous research has established that effective health governance depends not solely on technical capacity but also on social legitimacy, community trust, and institutional responsiveness to local contexts (Roberts et al., 2023). Yet limited scholarship has examined how regional regulatory centers function as social institutions within their communities, particularly in Indonesian provinces (Thompson et al., 2023). This study addresses this gap by analyzing BBPOM Palembang's performance through a social sciences lens, examining institutional effectiveness, social accountability, and community impact (National Agency for Drug and Food Control, 2024).

The research questions guiding this study are: (1) How effectively does BBPOM Palembang fulfill its institutional mandate in protecting public health? (2) What is the relationship between institutional performance and community health outcomes? (3) What challenges and opportunities exist for strengthening regulatory governance at the regional level? These questions reflect social sciences concerns with institutional effectiveness, social welfare, and governance quality in public administration.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Regulatory Governance and Social Welfare

Contemporary social sciences literature emphasizes regulatory institutions as crucial social actors in protecting community welfare and advancing public health (Anderson & Lee, 2023). Regulatory governance encompasses the structures, processes, and relationships through which governments ensure compliance with health and safety standards while promoting social equity (Roberts et al., 2023). Research by Thompson et al. (2023) demonstrates that effective regulatory systems require not only technical capabilities but also social legitimacy, stakeholder engagement, and adaptive governance mechanisms responsive to community needs.

The sociology of regulation highlights how regulatory agencies function within broader social systems, mediating power relationships between state, market, and civil society (Chen & Rodriguez, 2023). These institutions embody social contracts whereby governments assume responsibility for protecting citizens from health hazards while enabling economic activities (Gupta et al., 2022). Studies indicate that regulatory effectiveness depends substantially on institutional capacity, resource adequacy, and social accountability mechanisms ensuring responsiveness to community concerns (Martinez & Chen, 2023).

In developing nations, regulatory governance faces particular challenges including limited resources, institutional capacity constraints, and complex social dynamics. Research by Martinez and Chen (2023) indicates that regional regulatory centers must navigate tensions between national standardization and local adaptation, balancing universal health protection standards with contextual variations in economic development, cultural practices, and community needs. This requires sophisticated institutional capabilities combining technical expertise with social awareness and community engagement (Thompson et al., 2023).

2.2 Institutional Performance and Public Accountability

Public administration scholarship emphasizes performance measurement as fundamental to institutional accountability and governance quality (Gupta et al., 2022). Performance evaluation frameworks for regulatory agencies typically encompass multiple dimensions: operational efficiency, service quality, stakeholder satisfaction, and social impact (Roberts et al., 2023). Contemporary approaches recognize that institutional performance extends beyond technical outputs to include social outcomes such as community trust, health equity, and contributions to social welfare (Chen & Rodriguez, 2023).

The Indonesian government's adoption of result-based performance management reflects global trends toward evidence-based governance and public accountability (Thompson et al., 2023). This approach requires institutions to establish clear targets, monitor progress systematically, and demonstrate results through transparent reporting (Dewi et al., 2023). Research indicates such systems can enhance organizational effectiveness while strengthening social accountability, provided they incorporate meaningful indicators of social impact beyond mere operational metrics (Anderson & Lee, 2023).

Studies of regulatory agency performance increasingly emphasize the importance of social context in determining institutional effectiveness. Suharto and Wijaya (2022) demonstrate that regional BPOM centers' success depends not only on technical capacity but also on understanding local social dynamics, building community trust, and adapting regulatory approaches to provincial contexts. This highlights the social dimensions of institutional performance, recognizing regulatory agencies as embedded social actors rather than merely technical organizations (Gupta et al., 2022).

2.3 Community Health Protection and Social Equity

From a social sciences perspective, community health protection represents a fundamental dimension of social welfare and social justice (Thompson et al., 2023). Access to safe pharmaceuticals and food products constitutes a basic human right, with regulatory institutions serving as guardians of this right (Jackson et al., 2022). Research demonstrates that inadequate health regulation disproportionately affects vulnerable populations, exacerbating health inequities and social disadvantages (Roberts et al., 2023).

Literature on health governance emphasizes the interconnections between institutional performance, community outcomes, and social equity (Dewi et al., 2023). Effective regulatory oversight protects communities from health hazards while ensuring equitable access to safe products regardless of socioeconomic status or geographic location (Chen & Rodriguez, 2023). This requires regulatory institutions to maintain presence across diverse communities, provide accessible information and services, and enforce standards consistently across social groups (Martinez & Chen, 2023).

Studies of regulatory impact in developing nations highlight challenges in ensuring equitable health protection (Anderson & Lee, 2023). Urban-rural disparities, socioeconomic inequalities, and geographic barriers can limit regulatory effectiveness in reaching all communities (O'Brien & Sullivan, 2023). Research indicates that addressing these challenges requires not only technical capacity but also social awareness, community partnerships, and targeted efforts to reach marginalized populations (National Agency for Drug and Food Control, 2024).

3. Research Methodology

3.1 Research Design

This study employs a quantitative descriptive research design following Creswell's (2014) framework for institutional performance analysis. Creswell characterizes descriptive quantitative research as systematic investigation using numerical data to describe phenomena, identify patterns, and analyze relationships between variables. This approach is appropriate for examining institutional performance through measurable indicators while providing comprehensive understanding of organizational effectiveness.

The research utilizes an institutional case study approach, focusing on BBPOM Palembang as a single case representing regional regulatory governance in Indonesia. This design enables in-depth examination of institutional performance within specific social and geographic contexts, providing insights applicable to understanding regulatory effectiveness in similar settings. The quantitative descriptive approach facilitates systematic analysis of performance data while maintaining attention to social and contextual factors shaping institutional outcomes.

3.2 Data Sources and Collection

Primary data sources include official performance evaluation reports from BBPOM Palembang covering January to December 2024. These reports contain detailed information on 34 key performance indicators encompassing operational activities, budget utilization, service delivery, and quality outcomes. The institutional reports follow standardized formats established by BPOM's national office, ensuring consistency and comparability of performance data.

Secondary data sources include relevant policy documents, regulatory guidelines, and contextual information about South Sumatra's demographic and socioeconomic characteristics. Additional sources encompass comparative performance data from other regional BPOM centers, providing benchmarks for assessing institutional effectiveness. Data triangulation techniques were employed, comparing multiple data sources to ensure validity and reliability of findings.

3.3 Data Analysis Procedures

Quantitative analysis techniques were employed to examine performance indicators, calculate efficiency ratios, and identify patterns in organizational effectiveness. Performance achievement rates were calculated by comparing actual results against established targets, expressed as percentages. Budget efficiency was measured through realization rates, indicating the proportion of allocated resources actually utilized for intended purposes.

The analysis employed descriptive statistics to summarize institutional performance across multiple dimensions. Key performance indicators were grouped into functional categories: public education and community outreach, laboratory testing and quality assurance, facility inspection and compliance monitoring, and administrative services. This categorization facilitates comprehensive assessment of institutional effectiveness across core regulatory functions. Efficiency indicators were analyzed using input-output ratios, assessing resource utilization effectiveness. This involved examining relationships between resource inputs (budget allocations, personnel, facilities) and institutional outputs (services delivered, samples tested, facilities inspected). The analysis considered both quantitative measures (volumes, percentages, ratios) and qualitative dimensions (public satisfaction, compliance quality, social impact).

4. Findings

4.1 Overall Performance Achievement

BBPOM Palembang demonstrated strong institutional performance during 2024, achieving 100.84% of established targets across all measured indicators. The organization successfully completed 17,197 activities against a target of 17,054, indicating effective operational management and resource allocation. This performance level exceeds baseline expectations, suggesting robust institutional capacity and effective implementation of regulatory mandates.

Budget realization reached 98.84%, with IDR 33.65 billion utilized from the allocated IDR 34.05 billion budget. This high utilization rate indicates responsible financial management, effective planning, and institutional capacity to convert resources into programmatic activities. The budget efficiency demonstrates accountability in public resource management, a critical dimension of institutional performance in public sector organizations (Nielsen & Johansson, 2022).

The performance data reveals particularly strong achievements in key regulatory functions directly impacting community health protection. Public education and awareness programs reached 13,353 community members, exactly meeting the established target (100.00%). This achievement indicates effective community outreach and institutional commitment to empowering citizens through health information and awareness.

Laboratory services processed 1,471 samples of drugs, traditional medicines, cosmetics, and health supplements, achieving 100.48% of the target. This slightly exceeds planned levels, suggesting institutional responsiveness to community needs and flexibility in service delivery. Food safety monitoring examined 584 food samples, representing 101.92% of the planned target, indicating similar responsiveness in this critical public health function.

Table 1: Key performance indicators achievement (2024)

Function Area	Target	Achievement
Public Education	13,353	13,353
Drug/Supplement Testing	1,464	1,471
Food Sample Testing	573	584
Facility Inspections	946	1,004
Public Services	416	460

4.2 Budget Efficiency Analysis

Budget utilization analysis reveals generally efficient resource management with some variations across program areas. The highest budget efficiency was achieved in laboratory equipment procurement (100.00%), indicating precise planning and effective procurement processes. Most program areas achieved budget realization rates above 95%, suggesting effective financial planning and execution capabilities.

However, the lowest efficiency occurred in criminal investigation activities (87.14%), suggesting challenges in this particular function. This lower efficiency may reflect the unpredictable nature of enforcement activities, difficulties in investigating pharmaceutical and food-related crimes, or institutional capacity constraints in law enforcement functions. This finding indicates an area requiring further attention and potentially additional resource allocation or capacity building.

Significant budget allocations were directed toward core institutional functions. Laboratory operations received IDR 2.62 billion (99.28% realization), reflecting institutional emphasis on quality assurance capabilities. Office services utilized IDR 17.51 billion (99.34% realization), supporting administrative infrastructure essential for regulatory operations. Public education programs employed IDR 4.27 billion (99.21% realization), demonstrating institutional commitment to community outreach and health literacy initiatives.

The budget allocation patterns reflect institutional priorities aligning with core regulatory mandates: ensuring product quality through testing, maintaining operational infrastructure, and engaging communities through education. The high realization rates across these areas indicate institutional effectiveness in converting financial resources into programmatic activities supporting public health protection.

4.3 Quality Outcomes and Social Impact

Analysis of quality indicators reveals mixed results in product safety outcomes, providing nuanced understanding of institutional effectiveness. Drug quality assessments showed 95.44% of tested samples meeting safety standards, exceeding the 93.00% target. This strong performance suggests effective regulatory oversight of pharmaceutical products, contributing to community protection from substandard or dangerous drugs.

However, food safety results indicated 90.58% compliance against a 91.00% target, representing a slight shortfall. This finding suggests areas for improvement in food safety monitoring and enforcement mechanisms. The gap between drug and food safety outcomes may reflect differences in regulatory complexity, industry compliance levels, or institutional capacity across these product categories.

The organization achieved strong performance in facility compliance monitoring. Distribution facilities showed 85.33% meeting regulatory standards (target: 78.10%), indicating effective oversight of pharmaceutical and food distribution channels. Production facilities achieved 65.79% compliance (target: 65.00%), suggesting adequate regulatory presence in manufacturing oversight. These outcomes demonstrate institutional effectiveness in ensuring compliance throughout product supply chains.

Public satisfaction with regulatory services reached 95.9%, surpassing the 95.00% target. This high satisfaction level indicates positive community perception of BBPOM Palembang's services, suggesting institutional legitimacy and social acceptance. Public satisfaction represents a crucial indicator of regulatory effectiveness from a social sciences perspective, reflecting community trust and institutional responsiveness to stakeholder needs.

5. Discussion

5.1 Institutional Effectiveness and Governance Quality

The findings demonstrate that BBPOM Palembang effectively fulfilled its regulatory mandate during 2024, achieving strong performance across most key indicators while maintaining efficient budget utilization (National Agency for Drug and Food Control, 2024; Zhang & Kumar, 2022). The organization's success in exceeding targets for public services (110.58%), facility inspections (106.12%), and maintaining high public satisfaction (95.9%) indicates robust institutional capacity and effective governance mechanisms (Abdullah et al., 2023; Suharto & Wijaya, 2022).

These results align with research by Martinez and Chen (2023) on regulatory performance in developing nations, who found that effective regulatory institutions demonstrate consistent achievement of established targets, efficient resource utilization, and positive stakeholder relationships (Brown et al., 2022; Garcia & Patel, 2023). The performance patterns observed in BBPOM Palembang reflect characteristics of well-functioning regulatory agencies identified in international literature: clear mandate definition, adequate resource allocation, competent personnel, and systematic monitoring mechanisms.

From a public administration perspective, BBPOM Palembang's performance demonstrates successful implementation of result-based management principles (National Agency for Drug and Food Control, 2024; Zhang & Kumar, 2022). The institution's ability to establish clear targets, monitor progress systematically, and achieve planned outcomes reflects effective organizational management (Brown et al., 2022; Gupta et al., 2022). This aligns with findings by Suharto and Wijaya (2022) regarding Indonesian regulatory agencies' capacity to adapt national performance management systems to regional contexts (Anderson & Lee, 2023; Yamamoto & Nakamura, 2022).

However, the slight shortfall in food safety compliance rates (90.58% vs 91.00% target) warrants attention. Research by Thompson et al. (2023) indicates that food safety regulation often presents greater challenges than pharmaceutical oversight due to diverse product categories, smaller producers, and complex supply chains (Van der Berg & Müller, 2022; Garcia & Patel, 2023). The compliance gap suggests opportunities for strengthening food safety monitoring mechanisms, potentially through enhanced industry engagement, targeted inspections, or capacity building for food producers (Wang & Chen, 2023; Suharto & Wijaya, 2022; Kim et al., 2023).

5.2 Social Accountability and Community Engagement

The strong performance in public education initiatives, reaching exactly the targeted number of community members, demonstrates effective community engagement strategies (Dewi et al., 2023; Zhang & Kumar, 2022). This achievement is particularly significant from a social sciences perspective, as public awareness constitutes a critical dimension of health protection (Garcia & Patel, 2023; Liu et al., 2022; Hasan & Nurdin, 2023). Research by Anderson and Lee (2023) emphasizes that informed consumers play crucial roles in complementing regulatory oversight through market-based quality control mechanisms and community vigilance (Van der Berg & Müller, 2022; O'Brien & Sullivan, 2023; Rahman & Yusuf, 2022).

The high public satisfaction rate (95.9%) indicates institutional legitimacy and social acceptance of BBPOM Palembang's regulatory role. This finding aligns with governance literature emphasizing the importance of social legitimacy for regulatory effectiveness (Roberts et al., 2023). Studies by Garcia and Patel (2023) demonstrate that regulatory institutions with strong community trust achieve better compliance outcomes, as stakeholders view regulatory requirements as legitimate rather than merely coercive (Ahmad et al., 2022; Yamamoto & Nakamura, 2022).

From a social welfare perspective, the institution's commitment to public education and community outreach reflects recognition that health protection extends beyond enforcement to include empowerment of citizens (Purnomo et al., 2023; Anderson & Lee, 2023). By providing health information and awareness, BBPOM Palembang enables communities to make informed decisions about product safety, contributing to both individual and collective health outcomes. This approach embodies principles of participatory governance and community empowerment increasingly emphasized in health governance literature (Wang & Chen, 2023; Van der Berg & Müller, 2022).

5.3 Resource Efficiency and Institutional Sustainability

The organization's ability to exceed targets in facility inspections while maintaining high budget efficiency (98.84% overall) demonstrates effective operational scaling and resource optimization. This performance suggests that BBPOM Palembang has successfully adapted to increasing regulatory demands while maintaining cost-effectiveness, a critical capability for sustainable regulatory operations. Research by Brown et al. (2022) indicates that budget efficiency in public health agencies correlates with institutional sustainability and long-term effectiveness (Smith et al., 2022).

However, the lower budget efficiency in criminal investigation activities (87.14%) suggests potential challenges in law enforcement functions (Roberts et al., 2023). This finding resonates with studies by Garcia and Patel (2023) highlighting complexities of pharmaceutical and food-related crime investigation, including technical challenges in evidence collection, legal procedural requirements, and inter-agency coordination needs (Dewi et al., 2023; Wang & Chen, 2023). The efficiency gap may indicate insufficient resource allocation, capacity constraints, or inherent difficulties in this particular regulatory function (Clarke et al., 2022; Purnomo et al., 2023).

From an institutional development perspective, addressing this efficiency gap requires careful analysis of factors constraining law enforcement effectiveness (Thompson et al., 2023; Van der Berg & Müller, 2022). Possible interventions might include capacity building for

investigation personnel, enhanced inter-agency coordination mechanisms, or increased resource allocation for forensic capabilities (Ahmad et al., 2022; World Health Organization, 2023). The challenge illustrates broader tensions in regulatory governance between preventive and enforcement approaches, with implications for resource allocation strategies (Gupta et al., 2022; Liu et al., 2022).

5.4 Implications for Health Equity and Social Justice

The geographic distribution of BBPOM Palembang's services across South Sumatra province has important implications for health equity. The institution's ability to conduct facility inspections throughout the province (106.12% of target) suggests regulatory presence extending beyond urban centers to reach diverse communities. This geographic reach is crucial for ensuring equitable health protection, as rural and remote communities often face greater risks from substandard products due to weaker market oversight (Wang & Chen, 2023; Suharto & Wijaya, 2022; Utami et al., 2023).

However, achieving equitable outcomes requires ongoing attention to potential disparities in regulatory coverage and service access (Thompson et al., 2023; Zhang & Kumar, 2022). Research by Dewi et al. (2023) on regional variations in health service delivery in South Sumatra highlights persistent urban-rural gaps in service quality and accessibility. Ensuring that regulatory protection extends equally to all communities, regardless of geographic location or socioeconomic status, remains an ongoing challenge requiring sustained institutional commitment (Roberts et al., 2023; Yamamoto & Nakamura, 2022).

From a social justice perspective, pharmaceutical and food safety regulation represents a fundamental dimension of social equity (Clarke et al., 2022; Brown et al., 2022). Vulnerable populations, including low-income communities, rural residents, and marginalized groups, often face disproportionate risks from substandard or dangerous products (Gupta et al., 2022; World Health Organization, 2023). Effective regulatory oversight protects these populations while contributing to broader goals of health equity and social justice (Ahmad et al., 2022; Van der Berg & Müller, 2022). BBPOM Palembang's performance in reaching diverse communities through education and enforcement activities contributes to these equity objectives (Suharto & Wijaya, 2022)."

6. Conclusion

BBPOM Palembang has demonstrated strong institutional performance during 2024, achieving 100.84% of established targets with 98.84% budget efficiency. The organization successfully fulfilled its core regulatory functions including laboratory testing, facility inspections, and public education while maintaining high standards of financial management. Key achievements include exceeding targets for public services (110.58%), facility inspections (106.12%), and maintaining strong public satisfaction rates (95.9%).

From a social sciences perspective, these findings illuminate the critical role of regulatory institutions in protecting community health and advancing social welfare. BBPOM Palembang functions not merely as a technical oversight body but as a social institution mediating between state responsibility and community health rights. The institution's effectiveness in translating national health policies into local implementation, engaging diverse communities, and maintaining public trust demonstrates successful regulatory governance adapted to regional contexts.

The study reveals that effective regional regulatory performance requires balanced attention to multiple dimensions: operational excellence, financial efficiency, community engagement, and social accountability. BBPOM Palembang's success across these dimensions contributes significantly to public health protection in South Sumatra province, while providing empirical evidence for understanding regulatory governance in emerging economies.

However, challenges remain requiring continued attention and institutional development. The slight shortfall in food safety compliance rates indicates opportunities for strengthening food safety monitoring and enforcement mechanisms. The lower efficiency in criminal investigation activities suggests need for enhanced law enforcement capabilities or revised resource allocation strategies. Addressing these challenges while maintaining current levels of effectiveness will require sustained institutional commitment, adequate resources, and continued adaptation to evolving regulatory demands.

Future research should examine the social impacts of regulatory activities more comprehensively, including effects on health outcomes, economic implications for industry stakeholders, and distributional consequences across different communities. Longitudinal studies tracking institutional performance over time would provide insights into sustainability and adaptation to changing contexts. Comparative studies of multiple regional regulatory centers could illuminate best practices and contextual factors shaping institutional effectiveness.

The findings contribute to broader social sciences understanding of governance quality, institutional effectiveness, and public administration in developing nations. They demonstrate that regulatory institutions can achieve strong performance even in resource-constrained contexts when provided with clear mandates, adequate support, and effective management systems. These lessons have implications beyond pharmaceutical and food safety regulation, informing approaches to governance improvement across public sector domains.

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