# Government Analytical Capacity in Salt Industry Development in Jeneponto Regency

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**ABSTRACT:**

The development of the salt industry is determined not only by the availability of land and production potential but also by the government's capacity to use data, evaluate needs, and formulate policies objectively. This study aims to analyze the analytical capacity of the Jeneponto Regency Government in salt industry development. The study used a qualitative approach with a case study design. Data were collected through in-depth interviews and document analysis, with informants selected purposively from the Department of Fisheries and Maritime Affairs, the Department of Trade and Industry, the Regional Development Planning Agency, salt farmers, and business actors. Data analysis used an interactive model that included data condensation, data presentation, and the drawing and verification of conclusions. The results indicate that the local government's analytical capacity has been established but has not yet reached an optimal level as a basis for strategic decision-making. In the dimension of data-driven policy formulation, the government has used sectoral data and field information, but this data remains disparate and has not fully served as a basis for determining policy priorities. In terms of needs and impact evaluation, government programs have partially addressed the needs of fish farmers and business owners. However, their impact remains limited to operational aspects and has not yet addressed structural issues such as production quality, price stability, access to capital, technology, and business sustainability. In terms of objective policy analysis, stakeholder engagement has been conducted, but actor input has not yet developed into a systematic mechanism for evaluating policy alternatives. This study concludes that the Jeneponto Regency Government's analytical capacity is in a transitional stage, demonstrating data-informed, programmatically responsive, and coordinative-consulting capacity, but has not yet reached evidence-driven, structurally evaluative, and systematically objective capacity.

Keywords: Analytical Capacity, Local Government, Salt Industry, Data Driven Policy.

**Introduction**

Developing local resource-based industries is a key agenda for strengthening regional economies, increasing the added value of commodities, and promoting regional development independence (Erfit et al., 2023; Terekhov et al., 2021). However, the success of this agenda is determined not only by the availability of natural resources or the magnitude of production potential, but also by the government's capacity to manage that potential. In this regard, government capacity is crucial because the government not only carries out administrative functions but also determines how local-sector problems are identified, how data is used, how actor needs are understood, and how policy options are formulated (Ashton & Bell, 2024; Caldwell et al., 2021).

The salt industry is a locally resource-based sector that holds a strategic position due to its relationship with public consumption needs, industrial raw material needs, and the livelihoods of coastal communities (Nugraha et al., 2025). However, the development of the salt industry in Indonesia still faces fundamental challenges, particularly in aspects of production quality, supply continuity, production technology, price stability, market access, and farmer institutions (Haendra et al., 2021; Prihantini et al., 2024; Riza & Wijaya, 2022). This complexity indicates that salt industry development cannot be resolved solely by increasing production but requires government capacity to analyze problems, use data, evaluate needs, and formulate appropriate interventions. Therefore, the government's ability to understand problems, determine interventions, and evaluate policies is a crucial basis for more rational and targeted decision-making (Howlett, 2015; Wu et al., 2018; Mukherjee et al., 2021).

In Indonesia, the development of the salt industry still faces a gap between the potential for smallholder salt production and the demand for quality salt for industry (Simamora et al., 2021; Winda et al., 2025). Smallholder salt plays a crucial role in the national supply structure, but its production process remains largely dependent on climatic conditions, simple technology, and limited production infrastructure. These conditions mean that increases in smallholder salt production have not kept pace with improvements in quality, supply stability, and industrial demand. Therefore, salt development policies require not only technical support for farmers but also government capacity to integrate data on land, production, farmers, business actors, industrial needs, and the direction of policy interventions.

In Jeneponto Regency, the development of the salt industry demonstrates the close relationship between local resource potential and the need for government capacity building. This region has a strong base for artisanal salt production and has positioned salt as a leading sector in the direction of regional industrial development. However, the development of the salt industry in Jeneponto Regency still faces challenges. Land potential has not been fully converted into stable productivity, the quality of artisanal salt remains below industrial standards, and the production system remains dominated by traditional methods. These conditions demonstrate that salt industry development requires not only technical support but also the government's ability to understand sectoral issues more comprehensively.

The persistent challenges facing the development of the salt industry in Jeneponto Regency make the region a relevant case study for examining government capacity through analytical skills. In developing the salt industry, the local government faces the need to connect various pieces of information regarding land, production, salt quality, business actors, technology, prices, and the direction of industrialization. If this information is not managed analytically, salt development policies risk becoming merely a series of sectoral programs that fail to address the industry's structural issues. Therefore, analytical skills are crucial to assess the government's ability to use information as a basis for understanding problems, determining priorities, evaluating needs, and formulating policy options.

This research is not aimed at examining government programs in the development of the salt industry, but rather at the government's capacity to analytically establish programs. Through the case of salt industry development, this research examines the local government's ability to use data, assess needs and impacts, and develop objective policy analyses. This perspective is important because weaknesses in public organizations' use of evidence can limit the quality of government program formulation and implementation (Newman et al., 2022).

Although the development of the smallholder salt industry has been extensively studied, most studies still focus on issues of production, technology, salt quality, marketing, farmer institutions, and sectoral interventions (Riza & Wijaya, 2022; Simamora et al., 2021; Winda et al., 2025). While this previous research is important, it does not adequately explain how local governments use data and information to understand salt industry issues and determine the direction of interventions. Therefore, this study aims to fill the research gap regarding government capacity in salt industry development, specifically analyzing the government's analytical capacity to formulate data-driven policies, evaluate needs and impacts, and conduct objective policy analysis.

This research contributes to local government administration and the development of local resource-based industries by demonstrating that salt industry development cannot be sufficiently explained by commodity potential or the existence of government programs. Salt industry development needs to be understood through the government's ability to transform data into decision-making, translate the needs of salt farmers and business actors into appropriate interventions, and connect the industrialization agenda with the real-world conditions of smallholder salt production..

**Methods**

This research uses a qualitative approach with a case study design. The research focuses on analyzing the analytical capacity of local governments in developing the salt industry in Jeneponto Regency, through three dimensions of analytical capacity: data-driven policy formulation, needs and impact evaluation, and objective policy analysis.

Jeneponto Regency was designated as the research location due to its status as the largest salt-producing region in South Sulawesi Province. The Jeneponto Regency Government, through Regional Regulation No. 4 of 2022, designated the salt industry as a leading sector. Furthermore, there remains a gap between the potential for salt industry development and the government's capacity to formulate evidence-based policies. Given these characteristics, Jeneponto Regency serves as a relevant case study for assessing the analytical capacity of local governments in developing the salt industry, aiming to accelerate its growth in Indonesia.

Research data was collected through in-depth interviews and document analysis. Informants were determined using a purposive sampling technique based on three criteria: having authority or involvement in salt industry development policies, having substantive knowledge of salt production or business, and having direct experience with government programs or interventions. Research informants consisted of the Fisheries and Maritime Office, the Trade and Industry Office, the Regional Development Planning Agency, salt farmers, and business actors. Secondary data were obtained from regulations, regional planning documents, salt industry development documents, sectoral data, technical reports, and other documents relevant to the research focus.

Data analysis used an interactive model from (Miles et al., 2018) that includes data condensation, data presentation, and drawing and verifying conclusions. In the data condensation stage, interview data and document analysis were selected, focused, coded, and classified based on three dimensions of analytical capacity. In the data presentation stage, the coding results were arranged in a thematic matrix to compare information between actors, between documents,

and between data collection techniques. In the conclusion drawing and verification stage, interpretation was carried out through pattern matching between empirical findings and the dimensions of analytical capacity. Conclusions were verified repeatedly through source triangulation, technique triangulation, and consistency checks between data.

**Results**

Analytical capacity in salt industry development refers to the ability of local governments to use data, field information, and technical knowledge as a basis for policy formulation. In this study, analytical capacity is operationalized through three aspects: the ability to formulate data-driven policies, evaluate needs and impacts, and conduct objective policy analysis. These three aspects are crucial because salt industry development is not only related to increased production but also concerns salt quality, price stability, market access, production technology, and the government's ability to accurately analyze the needs of farmers and business actors.

**Ability to Formulate Data Based Policies in Salt Industry Development in Jeneponto Regency.**

The ability to formulate data-based policies in salt industry development in Jeneponto Regency refers to the extent to which local governments are able to use data as a basis for understanding problems, determining priorities, and formulating policy intervention directions. In this context, analytical capacity is measured not only by the availability of data, but also by how that data is processed and transformed into operational policies. Therefore, data is not sufficient simply to supplement planning documents; it must serve as an analytical instrument for explaining problems, determining needs, and selecting the most relevant interventions.

Research findings indicate that local governments have used data in their policy formulation process, whether sourced from the Central Statistics Agency, the Regional Apparatus Organization, or field monitoring results. This process also involves input from fish farmers and business owners. This finding was clarified by an interview with the Head of the Industry Division of the Trade and Industry Office, who stated that:

“"We typically begin the process of formulating salt industry policies by assessing conditions and needs in the field, particularly from farmers and business owners. We gather input through coordination with the relevant Regional Apparatus Organization and direct monitoring. Afterward, we discuss the findings internally and align them with regional planning documents such as the Regional Medium-Term Development Plan and Regional Work Plan.”

This statement indicates that, early in the policy process, local governments have demonstrated basic capacity to utilize data as policy input. This is reflected in the existence of multi-source information collection mechanisms, including formal statistical data, cross-regional coordination, direct field observations, and the participation of non-governmental actors.

In preparing the roadmap for the development and construction of smallholder salt industrialization in Jeneponto Regency, a collaboration between the local government and the Center for Research and Development of Policy and Management at Hasanuddin University, data related to issues in salt industry development has been used as a basis for formulating the direction of salt industry development. This data covers land potential, salt productivity, salt quality, and the still-traditional production system (Table 2.1). The existence of this data indicates that the local government has an information base to identify the main obstacles facing the salt industry, particularly the gap between land potential and productivity, low NaCl quality, and limitations in production technology.

Table 2.1 Data related to obstacles to the development of the Salt Industry in Jeneponto Regency

| No | Data Type | Data Source |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | Land Potential<br>- Potential land area = 1.588.00 Ha<br>- Productive land = 828.06 Ha | Fisheries and Maritime Office |
| | Salt Productivity Fluctuates from 2020 to 2024 | Trade and Industry Office |
| 3 | Salt Quality<br>- Salt contains: ± 85-90% NaCl, while the national standard is 97% NaCl. | Fisheries and Maritime Office, research results. |
| 4 | The production system is still traditional and does not use geomembranes. | Fisheries and Maritime Office; Trade and Industry Office |

Source: Author's processing, 2026

Examining Table 2.1, it can be seen that the available data actually illustrate the core issues in the development of the salt industry in Jeneponto Regency. There is a gap between land potential and productive land, indicating that production capacity does not fully reflect the region's potential. Furthermore, fluctuating salt productivity indicates production is vulnerable to seasonality, technology, and the condition of production facilities. Salt quality also remains in the range of ±85–90% NaCl, indicating that artisanal salt does not meet industrial standards. The still-traditional production system demonstrates that technological modernization has not yet become a strong part of farmers' production practices. Thus, the available data not only illustrates the condition of the salt sector but also indicates the direction of the problems that should form the basis for determining policy priorities.

Research findings indicate that the relationship between problem data (Table 2.1) and policy action plans is not yet fully aligned. In the 2026–2035 action plan for developing the People's Salt Industry, the formulated programs include: 1) curriculum development; 2) competency development and human resource standardization; 3) technology and product development; and 4) organizational development. This action plan is important as a long-term development framework, but it still tends to be structured as a general and technical intervention. It is not yet clear how data on land disparities, productivity fluctuations, low NaCl levels, and traditional production systems are translated into more specific, measurable, and gradual policy priorities.

This situation indicates that data has been used to identify problems, but has not yet been fully utilized as a basis for developing clear intervention logic. For example, data regarding NaCl quality, which remains below industry standards, could be used to guide policies on quality improvement based on production technology, the use of geomembranes, standardization of harvesting processes, and quality-based price incentives. Similarly, data on land potential and productive land should be used to formulate land consolidation policies, map priority areas, and determine production areas suitable for promotion as the basis for salt industrialization.

Furthermore, research findings also indicate that the regional government, in formulating Regional Regulation No. 4 of 2022 concerning the 2022–2042 Regency Industrial Development Plan, which designated the salt industry as a leading industry, referred to data on natural resources, human resources, economic conditions, and technological developments. However, the data used was still macro and general in nature. The government has not yet robustly utilized specific data from the salt sector, such as data on salt quality, farmer production capacity, land ownership, production technology, distribution chains, prices, and business actor readiness. As a result, the designation of salt as a leading industry has a formal planning basis, but it is not yet fully supported by a detailed sectoral database to guide

the operational development strategy of the salt industry.

Information obtained from the Maritime Affairs and Fisheries Agency reinforces the fact that data have not been utilized in the salt industry development strategy. In developing programs, the Maritime Affairs and Fisheries Agency uses data on salt production, salt pond area, land ownership status, salt farmer data, and production facilities and infrastructure. This data was obtained from the Fisheries and Maritime Office, reports from salt activity assistants, and field data collection. This means that technical data for the salt sector is actually available at the Regional Apparatus Organization. However, this data is still primarily used for sectoral program needs, particularly farmer empowerment and production assistance, and has not been fully integrated into the broader regional salt industry policy formulation system.

Referring to Presidential Regulation No. 17 of 2025 concerning the Acceleration of National Salt Development, in industrial development, the government emphasizes the importance of providing data and information covering land maps, farmers, and business actors as a basis for salt industry development planning. Furthermore, local governments are also given a role in conducting data collection and continuous data updating. However, in Jeneponto Regency, although data related to production, farmers, land, and business actors is available, this data has not been fully utilized in an integrated manner to formulate salt industry development policies. The data is still used separately in the sectoral programs of each Regional Apparatus Organization.

Furthermore, information obtained from the Regional Development Planning Agency (BPBD) indicates that data and monitoring results have been used to identify specific needs, such as storage warehouses and improvements to farm road infrastructure. For example, local governments have used data and evaluation results to propose the construction of salt warehouses to the ministry and to encourage the provision of improved farm road infrastructure. This demonstrates that data has served as the basis for policy responses to field needs. However, the use of this data is still primarily focused on developing program proposals and has not yet been fully developed into a policy analysis system capable of determining cross-sectoral priorities, assessing risks, and anticipating market dynamics and the quality of the salt industry.

Thus, the ability to design data-driven policies in Jeneponto Regency remains largely administrative and procedural. The government's limited analytical capacity in salt industry development lies not in the lack of data, but rather in its inability to transform data into policy evidence. The local government has demonstrated initial ability to use data as supporting information, but has not yet fully utilized it as the primary basis for determining priorities, selecting interventions, and developing measurable salt industrialization strategies. This condition limits the local government's ability to formulate policies that are not only responsive to field conditions but also able to more systematically anticipate the dynamics of production, salt quality, technology, markets, and industry needs. Therefore, the government's analytical capacity in the dimension of data-driven policy formulation can be categorized as being at the data-informed stage, but not yet at the evidence-driven policymaking stage.

**Evaluation of Needs and Impacts in Salt Industry Development in Jeneponto Regency**

An evaluation of the needs and impacts of salt industry development in Jeneponto Regency shows that local government programs have attempted to address the needs of salt farmers and business owners, but the impact has been uneven and has not fully addressed the main challenges in salt industry development. Research findings indicate that the needs most frequently addressed by the government relate to mentoring, improving access, and constructing salt warehouses. However, more fundamental needs, such as price stability, limited capital, production

quality, production technology, and dependence on the seasons, remain persistent obstacles encountered by farmers and business owners.

Based on field findings, it was found that government assistance was deemed adequate to meet some of the needs of salt farmers. Assistance such as water pumps, warehouses, technical assistance, and improved road access were interventions directly felt by salt farmers. This was evident in the statement by one salt farmer:

"Yes, I think the government understands what we need, as they often provide assistance. They often come here to see the harvest. But the assistance isn't comprehensive, which is why salt prices are sometimes low. We just hope the government can help us with the salt price."

From the informant's statement, it can be understood that the assistance and field visits carried out by the government have made the farmers feel that the government has paid attention to their needs. However, this assistance has not been felt comprehensively and has not addressed the issue of salt prices, which is a frequent complaint of the farmers. Thus, the needs evaluation shows that the program provided has met some technical needs, but its impact has not fully reached the economic issues that directly affect the income of salt farmers.

Furthermore, research findings also indicate that government programs related to certification and business development have a direct impact on the development of the salt industry in the community. Facilitating Indonesian National Standard certification for iodized salt is one intervention deemed appropriate to the needs of entrepreneurs. This certification helps businesses strengthen legality and expand product marketing. However, research findings also indicate that businesses still face challenges such as volatile prices, limited stock when demand increases, and the need for access to capital. Thus, while the certification program has a positive impact on marketing, it has not fully addressed all business challenges.

On the other hand, research findings indicate that the government has attempted to formulate programs tailored to the needs of salt farmers and industry players, while adapting to government capabilities. However, production constraints remain, as salt farmers continue to use traditional methods. This was stated directly by the Head of the Fisheries and Maritime Office:

"The programs that have been prepared generally meet the needs of salt farmers, but still face obstacles in their implementation, including: the fulfillment of salt for industrial needs has not been met because most of the salt farmers in Jeneponto Regency are still traditional/conventional farmers so they have not been able to meet the NaCl quality target of > 97%; still dependent on weather conditions because most of the farmers are still traditional".

This statement indicates that the local government has recognized the program's suitability for the needs of fish farmers, but its impact remains limited by sub-modern production conditions. The main obstacles lie in salt quality, rudimentary production technology, and dependence on weather. Therefore, the assistance and mentoring provided have not been fully effective in improving salt quality to meet industry standards.

Thus, an evaluation of the needs and impacts of salt industry development in Jeneponto Regency shows that the local government has partially responded to the needs of salt industry players through assistance with production facilities, mentoring, improved access, warehouse construction, business development, and certification facilitation. However, the impact of these various programs remains stronger on operational aspects and has not fully addressed the key issues affecting the sustainability of the salt industry. Assistance and mentoring have helped production and business activities, but have not fully addressed issues such as pricing, equitable distribution of assistance, access to capital, limited stock, production quality, traditional production technology, and dependence on the seasons. These findings

indicate that the basic needs for salt industry development have been understood and partially addressed, but the impact of the programs remains limited because they have not fully addressed the structural barriers that determine quality improvement, business sustainability, and strengthening of the salt industry in Jeneponto Regency.

**Objective Policy Analysis in Salt Industry Development in Jeneponto Regency**

An objective policy analysis of salt industry development in Jeneponto Regency shows that the local government involves various actors in formulating policies on salt industry development, such as in the drafting of Regional Regulation No. 4 of 2022. This involvement is carried out through coordination meetings, discussion forums, and meetings with salt farmers, business groups, and relevant Regional Apparatus Organizations. Throughout this process, input from various actors is used as consideration in policy development, particularly regarding conditions and needs on the ground. This is as stated directly by the Head of the Industrial Division at the Industry and Trade Office:

"We engage stakeholders through coordination meetings, discussion forums, and meetings with salt farmers, business groups, and relevant Regional Government Organizations. We incorporate their input into policy development, particularly those directly related to conditions and needs on the ground."

From the informant's statement, it is understood that the objectivity of policy in developing the salt industry in Jeneponto Regency is not only based on government administrative considerations, but is also formed through interaction with other stakeholders. Even though input from stakeholders is only a consideration, it has not become an option in determining policy.

The research findings also indicate that the Jeneponto Regency government has prioritized salt industry development as a potential regional agenda. Interviews with the Trade and Industry Office revealed that the government plans the salt industry as part of its regional investment promotion program and views it as a shared, cross-stakeholder agenda. This finding suggests that policy direction is shifting from a sectoral program approach toward industrial development. However, this shift has not yet been accompanied by a clear mapping of how the interests of fish farmers, business owners, investors, and the local government are integrated into a single policy design.

Furthermore, the government's plan to make the salt industry an investment agenda is at odds with the current state of smallholder salt production. Interviews with the Fisheries and Maritime Office revealed that current salt industry development remains focused on providing facilities, mentoring, distributing production aid, and empowering smallholder salt business groups. This suggests that salt industry development policy is moving in two directions that are not fully connected. On the one hand, local governments are encouraging investment and industrialization, while on the other, technical implementation still relies on empowering and mentoring smallholder salt businesses.

The roadmap for the industrialization of community-based salt includes an agenda for improving quality and productivity through technological innovation, the development of demonstration plots, the preparation of feasibility studies, the strengthening of production facilities, and the provision of basic infrastructure. However, interviews indicate that the current policy is still at the coordination, coaching, mentoring, and investment cooperation exploration stage. Thus, the industrialization agenda is present in the draft policy document, but has not yet fully manifested in the form of operational stages that link community-based salt production with the development of the salt industry in a more systematic manner.

Thus, an objective policy analysis of the development of the salt industry in Jeneponto Regency shows that the local government has attempted to establish a policy process involving

various actors and has begun to position salt as a regional strategic agenda. However, this policy objectivity remains limited to the process of gathering input, coordinating, and formulating general policy directions. Stakeholder input has been used as consideration, but has not yet fully formed the basis for determining operational policy choices. Furthermore, the direction of industrialization and investment promotion has not been clearly linked to the conditions of smallholder salt production, which still relies on mentoring, empowerment, and assistance with production facilities. These findings indicate that policy analysis in the development of the salt industry has moved toward an industrial orientation, but has not yet fully produced a policy design capable of integrating the investment agenda, local production readiness, and strengthening smallholder salt businesses in an integrated manner.

## 4. DISCUSSION

The Jeneponto Regency Government's analytical capacity in salt industry development has not yet fully developed, as the government's ability to use data, evaluate needs and impacts, and objectively assess policy options. Research findings indicate that the local government already possesses a number of basic prerequisites for analytical capacity, such as access to sectoral data, field monitoring mechanisms, coordination between Regional Apparatus Organizations, involvement of farmers and business actors, and the preparation of salt industry development documents. However, these prerequisites have not yet fully developed into strong analytical capabilities in formulating program options, evaluating needs and impacts, and systematically assessing policy alternatives. Thus, the main issue in this research is not only the availability of data, but also the government's ability to process data, interpret problems, and translate them into strategic decisions.

In the dimension of data-driven policy formulation, government capacity remains data-informed and has not yet reached the evidence-driven stage. Data is generally used to describe conditions, not to build policy arguments, map priorities, or select the most appropriate interventions. This indicates that the government has used data as supporting information, but has not yet made evidence the primary basis for decision-making. Therefore, this finding is inconsistent with the view (Howlett, 2015) which emphasizes that analytical capacity requires more than just data utilization; the government needs to be able to systematically evaluate policy alternatives and practices.

Furthermore, in the needs and impact evaluation dimension, government capacity can be categorized as programmatic-responsive, meaning the ability to respond to needs through programs and assistance, but it has not yet developed into a systematic impact evaluation capability. Needs evaluation is still more suited to identifying immediate complaints and needs, rather than evaluating long-term impact indicators. In fact, in analytical capacity, the government is required not only to understand what the community needs but also to analyze whether the interventions provided actually change the conditions that underlie the problem. This finding aligns with (Newman et al., 2022) which explains that evidence-based policymaking is often hampered by the weak ability of public sector organizations to use diverse evidence to improve policy formulation and implementation.

This limited evaluative capacity is important to note because developing the salt industry requires the government to distinguish between program outputs and policy impacts. Assistance with production facilities, mentoring, and certification can be categorized as program outputs. However, the government's analytical capacity can only be considered strong if it can assess whether these outputs result in impacts such as improved salt quality, increased farmer incomes, expanded market access, stable supply, and strengthened industry competitiveness. The research findings show that the relationship between these outputs and impacts is not yet clearly evident. This suggests that the government is still more focused on implementing programs than on evaluating the changes they produce.

In terms of objective policy analysis, the government has demonstrated improved capacity by involving various actors in formulating salt industry development policies. This represents a significant advantage, as analytical objectivity cannot be established from an internal bureaucratic perspective. However, this capacity remains consultative and coordinative in nature and has not yet developed into a systematic process for evaluating policy alternatives. Stakeholder input is still considered as a consideration and not the primary basis for determining policy choices. According to (Wu et al., 2018) objectivity in analytical capacity implies not only the involvement of multiple actors but also the existence of mechanisms for assessing various policy options in a rational, open, and evidence-based manner. Furthermore, (Mukherjee et al., 2021) emphasize that the effectiveness of policy design depends on the government's ability to develop a combination of instruments appropriate to the complexity of the problem.

Thus, this study indicates that the Jeneponto Regency Government's analytical capacity is in a transitional state. The government cannot be said to lack analytical capacity, as it has utilized data, field monitoring, cross-sector coordination, stakeholder engagement, and established directions for salt industry development. However, this capacity is also ineffective because it has not yet fully produced evidence-based, in-depth, and objective formulation, evaluation, and analysis processes. The government still primarily carries out administrative and coordinating functions rather than strategic analytical functions.

These findings fundamentally reinforce the view that analytical capacity cannot be simply defined as the ability to collect data. Analytical capacity should be viewed as the government's ability to establish connections between data, problems, alternatives, intervention options, and expected impacts. In the case of Jeneponto Regency, this connection remains weak. Data has not fully informed policymaking, evaluations have not yet addressed structural impacts, and actor engagement has not yet developed into a systematic assessment of alternatives. Therefore, strengthening the government's analytical capacity needs to be directed at developing an integrated sectoral data system, an indicator-based impact evaluation mechanism, and an analytical forum that not only collects input but also assesses policy options based on evidence.

With this focus, developing the salt industry in Jeneponto Regency requires not only aid programs or planning documents, but also a local government with strong analytical capacity. This capacity will determine whether data can be transformed into decision-making, whether farmers' needs can be translated into structural interventions, and whether the industrialization agenda can be designed objectively and tailored to local conditions. Without a strengthened analytical capacity, salt industry development risks remaining a collection of administratively responsive sectoral programs that are insufficiently transformative in building a high-quality, competitive, and sustainable salt industry.

## 5. Conclusion

The Jeneponto Regency Government's analytical capacity for salt industry development has been established, but it has not yet been optimally utilized as a basis for strategic decision-making. This capacity is evident through the use of sectoral data, field monitoring, coordination between regional government agencies, involvement of farmers and business actors, and the preparation of salt industry development documents. However, the various government efforts in salt industry development have not yet fully developed into a systematic analytical process that connects data, problems, intervention options, and expected impacts.

The government's analytical capacity remains in a transitional stage. Local governments have utilized data, but have not yet fully utilized it as the primary basis for determining priorities and policy choices. The government has also responded to the practical needs of salt industry players, but has not yet sufficiently evaluated the impact of programs on structural issues such as

production quality, price stability, access to capital, production technology, and business sustainability. Furthermore, stakeholder engagement has been conducted, but has not yet developed into an objective, evidence-based mechanism for evaluating policy alternatives.

The Jeneponto Regency Government's analytical capacity can be categorized as data-informed, programmatically responsive, and coordinative and consultative, but it has not yet fully achieved evidence-driven, structurally evaluative, and systematically objective capacity. This indicates that developing the salt industry in Jeneponto Regency requires not only additional programs or technical assistance but also strengthening the government's capacity to process data, analyze problems, assess impacts, and develop more integrated policy options.

This research confirms that the government's analytical capacity in developing local resource-based industries cannot be measured solely by the availability of data, coordination forums, or planning documents. Analytical capacity must be seen in the government's ability to transform information into decisions that can address the industry's structural issues. Therefore, strengthening the analytical capacity of the Jeneponto Regency Government needs to be directed at integrating salt data, evaluating impacts based on indicators, and developing policy analysis mechanisms that can connect the industrialization agenda with the actual conditions of smallholder salt production.

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