



Local Government Political Will in Realizing the Success of Food Security in Ternate City

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ABSTRACT

Food security is a challenge faced by all countries worldwide, including Indonesia. In general, the Food Security Index in Indonesia is still below the world average, as well as the National Food Security Index of North Maluku Province, which ranks in the bottom 3, but one of the cities in North Maluku Province, namely Ternate City, actually has a high Food Security Index, which means that food security in Ternate City is good. This study aims to provide an overview of the political will, will-specifically, the policies, initiatives, and commitments of Ternate's local government, that influence the realization of food security in Ternate City. This research is grounded in the postpositivist paradigm, employing a semi-qualitative research design. The data in this study were obtained using triangulation techniques, namely observation, interviews, and documentation, and then analyzed using the NVivo 12 application. The results of this study indicate that the local government of Ternate City has demonstrated a strong political will in achieving food security, making it the most food-resilient area in North Maluku Province, despite facing obstacles such as weather factors. The success is also due to effective collaboration and synergy with various stakeholders, which can serve as a model for other regions. However, the realization of food security is supported by the existence of an adequate budget, its effective and efficient use, quality human resources, effective communication, and good synergy with various parties. It is hoped that the city of Ternate can serve as a model for other regions in Indonesia

INTRODUCTION

The world's food needs continue to increase in line with the growing global population. The increasing population is not the only factor that can cause national food security problems. However, this population growth can cause other problems, namely the issue of a lack of agricultural land, as land that originally functioned as agricultural land has had to change its use to residential and industrial purposes to meet the population's needs. These various problems pose threats and challenges to Indonesia's national independence in the food sector. The 1974 World Food Summit defined food security as the availability of sufficient global food supplies in the form of staple foods to maintain a stable growth in food consumption and to compensate for fluctuations in production and prices (Nor & Yusof, 2025). Furthermore, this definition is supported by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), which states that food security refers to a situation where people have access to sufficient, nutritious, and culturally appropriate food to support their physical growth and mental development (Muhylie et al., 2025).

According to the latest Global Report on Food Crises (GRFC), nearly 282 million people in 59 countries and regions experienced high levels of acute hunger in 2023. This represents a worldwide increase of 24 million from the previous year. This increase was due to an increase in food crisis reports as well as a sharp decline in food security. This food crisis can certainly disrupt world political stability (FAO, 2024). As an effort to prevent food crises, a measurement of the food security index called the Global Food Security Index (GFSI) was carried out. The Global Food Security Index is an annual assessment that measures food security across four key dimensions: food availability, affordability, consumption, and stability. According to the Global Food Security Index for 2022, Indonesia ranks 63rd out of 113 countries worldwide, with a score of 60.2. This value remains below the global average of 62.2. Until now, increasing food security has remained one of the top priorities in national development. There are three main reasons for the need to improve food security in Indonesia, namely (1) ensuring access to adequate and nutritious food for all Indonesian citizens is a form of fulfilling human rights, (2) adequate and nutritious consumption patterns are the foundation for the formation of quality Indonesian people, (3) food security is the main factor driving economic resilience, even the driver of national resilience and political stability of a sovereign country (Sutrisno et al., 2022).

Recognizing food security as a means of implementing government functions. Rasyid stated that the function of government consists of *service*, *empowerment*, *regulatory*, and *development* functions (Labolo, 2011). In this case, the government is a series of activities carried out by selected groups through the mediation of the people's interests, namely the government that then makes, implements, and supervises the implementation of the policies it creates. This series of activities carried out by the government is expected to realize order, justice, and welfare in a country (Thahir, 2019).

To determine the level of food security in each region of Indonesia, a food security assessment is conducted. The measurement is known as the Food

Security Index (FSI). The preparation of the IKP is aligned with the measurement method of the *Global Food Security Index* (GFSI). However, it still collects and adjusts data and information at the district/city and provincial levels in Indonesia. Based on data from the 2023 Food Security Index, North Maluku Province has an IKP value of 62.34, ranking it in the bottom 3 positions, or 32nd out of 34 provinces in Indonesia. However, the IKP of Ternate City in 2023 is ranked first in North Maluku Province with a score of 89.51. This value is excellent when compared to IKP in other districts/cities in North Maluku Province. In fact, Ternate City is ranked 18th out of 98 cities in Indonesia, and Ternate City is the most food-resistant area in Eastern Indonesia (NTT, Papua, and Maluku). This has shown success in realizing food security in Ternate City. This success is inseparable from the political will of the local government of Ternate City in realizing food security in Ternate City.

This research is important because it is based on a comprehensive review of the literature that researchers have conducted. Some previous studies can serve as a reference for efforts to achieve food resilience in an area, such as those by Rumawas et al. (2021), Siahaan & Sadad (2022), Suhaedah et al. (2023), Sirait (2023), and Mahendra et al. (2024). However, despite some of these studies, there has been no research to date that explicitly discusses the political will of local governments in achieving food security. Therefore, there is a need for further research on this success to contribute to achieving food security and to serve as a pilot for other regions, especially in the province of North Maluku, which aims to encourage an increase in the National Food Security Index. Therefore, this study aims to provide an overview of the local government's political will and the factors that affect the success of realizing food security in Ternate City.

METHODOLOGY

This study employs a postpositivist paradigm approach, specifically a semi-qualitative design, because it is still influenced by quantitative habits, as evident in the placement of theories within the data obtained (Purnamawati, 2020). The stages are (1) searching the problem, (2) literature review, (3) founding gap, (4) constructing hypothesis, (5) planning data sources, (6) constructing data collections method, (7) using a theoretical framework, (8) data collections, (9) keeping a diary, transcript, coding, themes, categorization and memos, (10) trying to find new sources of information, (11) triangulation, (12) constructing theory, (13) confirmation theory, and (14) constructing new theory (Bungin, 2020). However, in this study, the researcher only carried out stages (1) to (11), as this study does not aim to develop a new theory but to introduce an element of novelty through the application of existing theories.

The data is classified according to its source, namely primary data and secondary data (Simangunsong, 2016). The researcher collects data using a triangulation technique, which involves both interviews and observations to obtain primary data and documentation to obtain secondary data. The interview process was carried out with 11 informants consisting of Planners, Head of Food Distribution and Reserves, Head of Food Availability and Insecurity, Head of Food Consumption and Diversification, Head of Food

Security Division of the Ternate City Food Security Office, and Head of the Planning Sub-Division of the Ternate City Agriculture Office which each amounted to 1 person (so that a total of 6 informants), and five farming communities. The collected data is then analyzed using the NVivo 12 application. The data were analyzed using the theory of political will, as outlined by Brinkerhoff (2010), which encompasses government initiatives, priorities, mobilization of political support, public commitment, resource allocation, law enforcement, business continuity, and adaptation and learning (D. Brinkerhoff, 2010).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The following is a discussion related to the political will of local governments in realizing food security in Ternate City, North Maluku Province using the theory of political will according to Brinkerhoff (2010) which consists of government initiatives, priorities, mobilization of political support, public commitment and resource allocation, law enforcement, business continuity, and adaptation and learning (D. Brinkerhoff, 2010). To date, there are five distinct expert definitions regarding the definition, scope, and components of political will. However, in research conducted by Harris et al. (2023), the political will theory from Brinkerhoff (2010) was chosen because this concept encompasses all the necessary elements to identify the magnitude of the government's political will in implementing public policies (Harris et al., 2023). The results of this study were obtained from interviews, which were then analyzed using the NVivo 12 application (in the form of a *word cloud*), and supported by observation and documentation results.

Based on the processing of research data on **the dimensions of government initiatives**, the results of NVivo mapping were obtained as follows.



Figure 1. Word Cloud Government Initiative

Source: Processed by Researchers Using the NVivo 12 Application, 2025

The results of the data analysis in **Figure 1** show that the word most often associated with Government Initiatives is *RPJMD*. Based on these results, there is encouragement from actors in realizing food security in Ternate City. This is evident in the existence of government programs related to food security, which are outlined in Ternate City Regional Regulation Number 4 of 2021, specifically concerning the Regional Medium-Term Development Plan (RPJMD) of Ternate

through the food security program in the Ternate City RPJMD for 2021-2026, determining priorities through the selection of activities and budget planning, accompanied by the mobilization of political support, namely synergy between the local government of Ternate City and various parties. The local government has also shown public commitment and resource allocation through the division of tasks and functions as well as the allocation of resources in the form of providing assistance facilities. Political will is accompanied by law enforcement through the provision of sanctions in the event of irregularities. In addition, the existence of business continuity, which involves committing to carrying out every program and activity, is crucial for local governments to achieve the success of this food security initiative, which is accompanied by Adaptation and learning through the evaluation process and the resulting innovation.

The realization of the success of food security in Ternate City is due to several supporting factors, as found in the mapping results using the NVivo 12 application, as follows:



Figure 8. Word Cloud Supporting Factors

Source: Processed by researchers Using the NVivo 12 Application, 2025

According to **Figure 8**, several **supporting factors** were identified in achieving food security in Ternate City, including a sufficient budget, quality Human Resources (HR), and effective communication and synergy among related parties. However, there are weather factors that affect the success of food security. Budget and human resources can be both a supporting factor and an inhibiting factor in achieving food security in Ternate City. The budget greatly supports the running of various programs and activities, but if the existing budget is lacking, it can affect and even hinder the running of these programs and activities. In addition to the budget, quality human resources are very supportive in realizing food security in Ternate City.

In improving and maintaining this success, the Regional Government of Ternate City must continue to strive to maximize the use of the budget effectively and efficiently, in line with Presidential Instruction Number 1 of 2025 concerning Expenditure Efficiency in the Implementation of the State Revenue and Expenditure Budget and the Regional Revenue and Expenditure Budget for the 2025 Fiscal Year, and further develop the quality of Human Resources (HR), through the upgrading of education and training activities specifically for civil servants with an educational background in the agricultural sector to fill the functional position of agricultural extension workers and technical guidance activities for existing agricultural extension workers.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

Based on the results of the research, it can be concluded that every dimension of political will in realizing food security in Ternate City has been implemented well, this can be seen from the existence of local government initiatives, priorities through the selection of activities and budget planning, the mobilization of political support through collaboration between local governments and with other parties, public commitment and resource allocation through the main tasks and functions that are clear and resource allocation in the form of providing assistance facilities, law enforcement through the provision of sanctions, in the event of irregularities, business continuity by committing to running every program and activity, as well as Adaptation and learning through the evaluation process and innovation that is produced. The success of achieving food security is influenced by supporting factors such as an adequate budget, quality human resources, and effective communication and synergy. In the future, local governments need to increase their use and improve budget planning to maintain the success of this food security initiative.

This research has limitations because it is only limited to being carried out in Ternate City, North Maluku Province, where Ternate City is the most food-resistant area in North Maluku Province, so in the future research related to the political will of local governments in realizing food security can be carried out in other food-resistant areas and in areas that are still food vulnerable so that research results that are different from the results of this research can be obtained.

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