

AGILITY OF THE SECRETARIAT GENERAL OF THE MINISTRY OF MARINE AFFAIRS AND FISHERIES POST-IMPLEMENTATION OF ORGANIZATIONAL SIMPLIFICATION

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ABSTRACT

This research examines the organizational agility of the Secretariat General of the Ministry of Maritime Affairs and Fisheries (SETJEN KKP) following Indonesia's bureaucratic reform, which mandated structural simplification, position equalization, and team-based work systems to enhance public sector responsiveness. Against the backdrop of rapid technological advancements and the VUCA (volatility, uncertainty, complexity, ambiguity) environment, the research evaluates SETJEN KKP's alignment with Wolter Aghina's agile framework across five dimensions: Strategy, Structure, Processes, People, and Technology. Using a qualitative descriptive approach, the study collected primary data through interviews and observations, supplemented by secondary data from regulations, reports, and documents. Findings indicate progress in agility, particularly through structural simplification and digital adoption (e.g., Electronic-Based Government Systems). However, challenges persist, including budget inflexibility, limited functional position mobility, and cultural resistance to change. The study highlights the need for optimized coordination, process innovation, and dynamic human resource development to realize agile transformation fully. Theoretically, it contributes to public administration literature on bureaucratic reform; practically, it offers policymakers insights into refining agile implementation in Indonesia's public sector.

KEYWORDS

organizational agility, public sector reform, bureaucratic simplification, digital transformation,



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INTRODUCTION

Public organizations operate in a dynamic and ever-changing environment. Due to massive technological developments, environmental changes have become an increasingly challenging challenge for public organizations in recent decades

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(van der Voet et al., 2015; Wilson & Knighton, 2021; Wu, 2023). According to various advances in technology and digitalization processes, the environment today is much faster and more unpredictable than in the past. The digital revolution, which is characterized by the phenomenon of *the Internet of Things (IoT)* (Daft, 2010), *big data*, automation, robotics, cloud computing, and artificial intelligence (AI), results in very open and unlimited access to knowledge. The development of technology and the use of digital services make it easier for people to communicate, get information, and get services faster and more easily with high value. On the other hand, disruptive and continuous change raises societal concerns because of a vulnerable and unpredictable future. (Cahyono, 2018; Mergel et al., 2019; Shafritz et al., 2023)

The current environmental conditions have resulted in higher public demands for public services. Public organizations are required to be able to provide services quickly and easily with high value; the community expects that public organizations can provide services similar to private organizations in terms of value, speed, and availability (Mergel et al., 2019).

As a public organization, the government has an important function as a regulator of society and resources to achieve public welfare. To achieve this, the government has the authority to establish and enforce rules that govern various aspects of people's lives, manage resources, and provide services to the community. The government's methods and approaches in carrying out its role always evolve with environmental changes. In the modern era, various innovations in improving the government work system, including public services, include the concept of (Shafritz et al., 2023; Huges, 1994; Shafritz et al., 2023) *New Public Management* (NPM), *New Public Service* (NPS), *Reinventing Government*, etc. The current environmental conditions are called VUCA, which is a world full of volatility (Shafritz et al., 2023) uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity, with volatile financial and commodity markets and geopolitical instability. (McKinsey & Co, 2023). In the current VUCA environment, government organizations must be more flexible, innovative, responsive, open, and intelligent (Deloitte, 2010); traditional management models are no longer enough to keep organizations ahead of the curve. One of the new concepts that is taken into account to address current environmental conditions is the agile-based approach (Van der Wal, 2020; Holbeche, 2018; Stephens et al., 2022).

Agile is the ability to move quickly and easily change direction or adapt to new circumstances. Agility is also often associated with responsive and agile traits. The importance of agility in government organizations is increasingly realized as the world faces significant environmental changes during the COVID-19 pandemic. The 2021 *Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development* (OECD) report (OECD, 2021) said that the COVID-19 pandemic has significantly affected the lives of individuals and organizations around the world (Alberts & Hayes, 2003). The existence of COVID-19 has made governments globally aware of the importance of technology and online platforms in providing services to the community and the importance of customization and responsiveness in overcoming crisis conditions. Lockdowns and social distancing have led to a massive shift in social and economic activities to online platforms, increasing the use of these platforms in various sectors.

The urgency of improving government organizations in Indonesia has been realized for a long time. Organizational improvement is carried out in stages and is prepared in a *Grand Design* of Bureaucratic Reform (2010-2025), the ultimate goal is to realize a world-class *bureaucracy* (Presidential Regulation Number 81 of 2010). However, Indonesia has not succeeded in realizing this. According to data submitted by *Transparency International* during the period 2012 to 2022, Indonesia's Corruption Perception Index has always been below the global average of 43, had reached the highest score in 2019 with a score of 40 out of a total score of 100, and placed it in 85th place, below several other Southeast Asian countries such as Malaysia, Singapore, and Brunei Darussalam. However, in 2022, there was a significant decline, with Indonesia's score dropping drastically to 34 and ranked 110 out of 180 countries surveyed.

The results of the KPK study show that there is still a risk of corruption in the implementation of K/L/PD duties, including the risk of misuse of budget management, which reached 66% in Ministries/Institutions and 77% in Regional Governments. The risk of non-objective management of human resources during promotion/mutation is 47% in Ministries/Institutions and 80% in Regional Governments.

From the perspective of public services, the Government Effectiveness Index published by *The Global Economy* shows an increasing trend, although until 2021, the score is still at 0.38 in the score range of -2.5 (weak) to 2.5 (strong). The Government Effectiveness Index measures views on the quality of public services, its independence from political pressure, the quality of policy formulation and implementation, and the extent to which the government fulfills its commitment to the policy. The score still shows that the institutional capacity/effectiveness of the government in Indonesia is lagging when compared to the progress achieved by other countries. A low score indicates that there are still problems in the administration of the state. In terms of accountability, the National Average Performance Accountability Value in 2021 is 67.92 out of a scale of 100, indicating that the accountability of government agencies, both Ministries/Institutions, Provincial Governments, and the central government, is largely unsatisfactory. (Ministry of PAN and RB, 2022a)

Based on the above, it can be seen that the bureaucracy in Indonesia has not succeeded in realizing an effective government that provides services to the community in accordance with current environmental conditions. President Joko Widodo conveyed the commitment to transform government organizations into dynamic organizations in his presidential inauguration speech at the Plenary Meeting of the People's Consultative Assembly of the Republic of Indonesia on October 20, 2019. At that time, one of the President's directives was to simplify the bureaucracy into two levels and replace or transfer the position with a functional position based on certain expertise, skills, and competencies.

The president's commitment is the beginning of the implementation of Indonesia's Bureaucratic Reform in 2019-2025, which transitions from a *performance-based government* to a dynamic government in accordance with the Regulation of the Minister of PAN and RB Number 25 of 2020 concerning the Road Map for Bureaucratic Reform for 2020-2024. One of the areas in Bureaucratic Reform is Organizational Structuring, which is implemented through the Organizational Simplification policy. This policy is implemented in three stages of

the organizational simplification process that is implemented nationally, namely: (1) Simplification of the organizational structure through the Minister of PAN and RB number 25 of 2020, which changes the model of the government's organizational structure from initially structural-based with 4-5 levels to an organization with two levels; (2) Equalization of positions through the Minister of PAN and RB number 17 of 2021, namely transferring administrative positions to functional positions; and (3) Adjustment of the Work System through the Ministerial Regulation of PAN and RB number 7 of 2022, which changes the work mechanism from a hierarchical form to a team-based one that prioritizes collaboration.

The organizational form is in accordance with the agile organizational form according to Aghina et al. (2015), where agile organizations have a paradigm of viewing organizations as "living organisms" or living organisms that are constantly changing, so that the agile organizational structure is not like a pyramid but more like microorganisms. The components in the organizational structure are quick changes, flexible resources, boxes and lines are less important, focus on action, leadership shows direction and enables action, teams are built around end-to-end accountability (Aghina et al, 2015). Ministerial Regulation 7 of 2022 translates to Fast, dynamic, flexible change; Focus on the action, not "boxes and lines"; Leadership that can direct and move; Teamwork responsible for the outcome (Regulation Minister of PAN and RB, 2022).

All stages of organizational simplification are carried out to encourage the formation of agile organizational principles such as adaptability, flexibility, and collaboration. This aims for government agencies to change the paternalistic pattern into a culture of partnership in serving the public and strengthening interaction between work units. Bureaucratic simplification is expected to create a government organization that is more in line with current environmental conditions (Syafurudin, 2023).

All government agencies in Indonesia must follow the policy of simplifying the organization. The Ministry of PAN and RB, as coordinators, appointed several ministries as Pilot Projects, one of which is the Ministry of Maritime Affairs and Fisheries.

MPA is a public organization tasked with managing Indonesia's marine and fisheries sector, which has great potential, especially since Indonesia is the largest archipelagic country in the world. Based on Pushidrosal's 2018 data, Indonesia has around 17,504 islands with a water area of 6.4 million km², consisting of territorial seas, inland waters and islands, and Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZs). Indonesia's fishery resources cover 37 percent of the world's fish species, with great potential in the aquaculture sector. The potential land for aquaculture reaches 17.91 million hectares, but its utilization is only around 2.7%. In 2018, the aquaculture subsector accounted for 37.71% of the total fishery export value and 1.13% of the total non-oil and gas export value. Indonesia also has large and diverse natural resources, including fishery resources, seaweed, mangrove forests, coral reefs, and marine energy.(Directorate of Marine Conservation and Biodiversity, MPA, 2018)(Ministry of Marine Affairs and Fisheries, 2024)

The various potentials of Indonesia's fisheries and marine sector show that natural resources are one of the fundamental assets that must be managed optimally to improve the welfare and prosperity of the Indonesian people. However, the

fisheries sector's contribution only accounts for <3% of the national GDP. This figure is much less than the agricultural sector, which contributed 7 – 10.9% throughout 2021 – Q3 2023 (Indonesian Central Statistics Agency, 2023).

This shows that the high potential of the KP sector has not been utilized optimally. Marine and fisheries development has challenges because of its interconnectedness with many sectors, and is also sensitive to interactions, especially with environmental aspects. Various fisheries management issues in Indonesia have the potential to threaten the sustainability of fish resources and the environment, the sustainability of people's livelihoods in the fisheries sector, food security, and economic growth that comes from the use of marine and fishery resources (Ministry of Maritime Affairs and Fisheries, 2024).

One of the units that plays an important role in achieving the strategic and organizational goals of the KKP is the Secretariat General (Secretary General). The Secretary General is responsible for coordinating and controlling the Ministry's implementation of policies and programs. The Secretary General also assists the Minister in formulating strategic policies, planning programs, and preparing budgets. In addition, it acts as a facilitator for the achievement of the organization's mission by providing support in administration, finance, households, domestic and foreign cooperation, public relations, law, information and data management, organizational structuring, and human resource management. The Secretariat General is also tasked with ensuring that national policies and programs related to the duties and functions of ministries are implemented effectively and efficiently. In carrying out its duties, the Secretary General coordinates not only with internal but also external parties of the KKP, such as the House of Representatives (DPR), the Regional House of Representatives (DPRD), Regional Governments, other Ministries/Institutions, NGOs, the private sector, and so on. It can be concluded that the Secretary General has a strategic role in achieving the organization's strategic goals and must be flexible, adaptive, and responsive to environmental changes. (Secretariat General of KKP, 2024)

In addition, the KKP's Secretary General also consists of functional and implementing officials. This organizational form was achieved after a three-stage process of organizational simplification that began in 2020. Bureaucratic simplification at the Secretary-General is carried out through simplification of organizational structure, equalization of positions, and adjustment of a more agile and flexible work system.

The Secretary General of the KKP underwent a significant change in the organizational structure, which was initially hierarchical with four levels of positions, to only two levels. The KKP carries out the mandate of organizational simplification by issuing Regulation of the Minister of Maritime Affairs and Fisheries No. 48 of 2020, updated with Regulation of the Minister of Maritime Affairs and Fisheries No. 5 of 2024 concerning the Organization and Work Procedures of the Ministry of Marine Affairs and Fisheries. The Ministerial Regulation abolishes levels 3 and 4 in the Secretary General of KKP, followed by equalizing administrative positions to functional ones. An exception occurs in the General Bureau, where hierarchy is still maintained in certain parts to support the smooth running of business processes. The leaders of level two organizations in the Secretary General are now in charge of the group of functional officials (JF) and implementers, no longer level three and four officials.

In the stage of simplifying the organizational structure in 2020-2023, the Secretary General of KKP abolished 22 echelon III positions and 68 echelon IV positions in accordance with the Minister of Fisheries and Fisheries Regulation Number 48 of 2020. Administrative positions were transferred to functional positions, and the Functional Position Supervisory Unit was formed through Ministerial Decree of KP Number 69 of 2020. Functional positions fostered by the Secretary General of KKP include JF Planner, State Budget Financial Management Analyst, Personnel Analyst, Policy Analyst, Legislative Drafter, Public Relations Institution, and Archivist.

Work teams led by team leaders are formed as a replacement for levels 3 and 4. The work team comprises a group of functional and implementing officials assigned by unit leaders. The work team may consist of one or more types of JFs or implementers, which can come from organizational or cross-organizational units, or, if needed, from across government agencies. Functional or implementing officials can be involved in two teams at once. Team members are flexible, and team member mutations or rotations can be changed as needed (Decree of the Minister of Maritime Affairs and Fisheries, 2023).

The simplification of the organization led to a significant change in the Secretary General of the KKP, which was initially in the form of a mechanistic bureaucracy. The organizational structure is shaped like a pyramid, with the highest position at the top and the lowest at the bottom. The hierarchy is clear with top-down work orders, i.e., commands originate from the top level of the pyramid and are passed down to the bottom. The execution of work orders must go through the bureaucratic layer, while the execution of orders is located at the bottom layer and is divided into parts that have a specific scope of work and are not related to each other (silos).

Organizational simplification aims to create an Agile organization. However, the Agile bureaucracy is the opposite of the bureaucratic organization that the Secretary General of KKP has run. In carrying out its activities, bureaucracy tends to refer to rules and move according to procedures, while Agile organizations are interactive, fast, precise, agile, and responsive to change. This causes the application of agility principles to government organizations to provide greater challenges than to private organizations. According to the use of Rulinawaty et al. (2020) Mergel et al. (2021) agile approaches, it requires a significant change in bureaucratic culture.

The challenge of organizational change is to find and develop better processes by leaving the past behind and focusing on better processes for the organization's future. So, it is important to research whether the organizational simplification carried out by the Secretary General of the Ministry of Maritime Affairs and Fisheries has succeeded in realizing a more *agile organization*.

In this study, the organizational characteristics of the Secretary General of KKP will be examined after organizational simplification. The theory used in this study is the Theory of Wolter Aghina, which states that an organization can be said to be *agile* if it has the following characteristics: 1) Strategy (Aghina et al., 2018) *North star embodies across the organization*; 2) Structure: *Network of Empowered Teams*; 3) Process: *Rapid Decision and Learning Cycles*, 4) Humans: *Dynamic People Model That Ignites Passion*; 5) Technology: *Next-Generation Enabling Technology*.

To ensure the elements of novelty or findings from the research, an analysis of the mapping of previous research was carried out on *Google Scholar* with the help of the *Publish Perish* application. The keywords used are *Agile organization*, *Public Sector*, *re-structurisation* for articles published in 2014 – 2024 (last 10 years). An analysis using VOSviewer of more than 200 published articles showed 91 research items in 9 clusters, with 887 links and 1445 link strengths, indicating that research on organizational restructuring in the public sector has grown, but research related to Agile approaches in public organizations is still limited. Overlay visualization reveals that research on Agile methodologies began before 2019, while Agile transformation and Agile teams have been in focus since 2020. A Google Scholar search with the keyword "Bureaucratic Simplification" yielded 2,140 articles, showing great concern for this policy. However, research on the final stage of bureaucratic simplification, namely "Work System Change," has not been found. Therefore, further research is needed to evaluate whether the implementation of the three stages of bureaucratic simplification can create a more agile organization in Indonesia, especially at the Secretariat General of the Ministry of Maritime Affairs and Fisheries (SETJEN KKP).

This research aims to evaluate the level of organizational agility of the Secretariat General of the Ministry of Maritime Affairs and Fisheries (SETJEN KKP) after the implementation of organizational simplification. Theoretically, this research is expected to develop the theory of public administration, especially in the transformation of government organizations from the traditional bureaucratic model to Agile organizations. Practically, the results of this study are expected to be an input for the KKP in evaluating and improving the effectiveness of bureaucratic simplification policies. In addition, this research can also be a reference for ministries, institutions, and local governments in implementing a three-stage organizational simplification policy as part of the national mandate for bureaucratic reform in Indonesia.

RESEARCH METHODS

This research uses descriptive qualitative research to collect, process, analyze, and interpret data in words and pictures, not numbers. The data obtained are compared with relevant theories and explained descriptively. The qualitative research process is evolving, so the research plan can change according to the development of data found in the field. The data in this study includes primary data obtained through interviews and observations, and secondary data such as regulations, reports, statistics, documents, audio, and videos relevant to the research. Data is collected through regulatory research, secondary document analysis, text data mining, field observation, and interviews. The validity of the data was tested through data triangulation and member checking. Data analysis techniques include data condensation, data presentation in descriptive narratives, and drawing conclusions and verification based on the patterns and themes found. The subject of the study is a public organization of the Secretariat General of the Ministry of Maritime Affairs and Fisheries with a population of 508 ASN people. This research was conducted naturally with a planned schedule from 2023 to 2025, including literature studies, licensing, initial observations, proposal preparation, guidance, research proposal seminars, revision of results, field studies, data analysis, final report writing, and thesis sessions.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Organizational agility refers to the ability of an entity to move quickly and adapt to changes that occur in the external and internal environment. In this context, agility includes recognizing and responding efficiently to market dynamics, technology, and stakeholder needs. The simplification of the organization at the SETJEN KKP is expected to make the organization more *agile* to provide the right services to the public amid an environment full of uncertainty. This policy is a mandate that the Secretary General of KKP must carry out, and the impact of this policy is not yet known, so it needs to be researched.

In this study, the agility after organizational simplification is seen from the organization's characteristics in 5 dimensions: the Strategy Dimension, the Structure Dimension, the Process Dimension, the Human Dimension, and the Technology Dimension. The results of interviews with resource persons, document analysis, and field observations showed the following results:

4. 1. Dimensi Strategi: *Northstar Embodies Across the Organization*

Agile organizations adopt the "Northstar Embodies Across the Organization" principle, whereby all organizational components move toward a common goal with no room for egocentrism. At the Secretariat General of the Ministry of Maritime Affairs and Fisheries (SETJEN KKP), the alignment of visions, goals, and performance indicators has been implemented from the leadership level to individuals in accordance with the Ministerial Regulation Number 35 of 2023. This alignment process is carried out through Performance Dialogue, which involves two-way communication between leaders and employees, allowing for mutual understanding and contribution. Balanced Scorecard-based performance management ensures cohesion between individual visions and actions, while performance-based budget management allows for flexibility in the allocation of funds to support the achievement of targets. However, several challenges have arisen, such as budget fragmentation due to individual behavior and limited flexibility for national priority programs, which require close supervision from leadership to ensure organizational adaptability and efficiency.

4. 2. Dimensi Struktur: *Network of empowered teams*

The change in structure to linear in the Secretary General of KKP after the simplification of the organization, which was regulated through Ministerial Decree KP 43 of 2023, removed echelons 3 and 4, leaving two levels of organization: the Secretariat General and Bureau, with a work team led by the Team Leader as the coordinator. This structure creates a more flexible and collaborative work system, speeding up the work process by reducing bureaucratic obstacles. The work teams formed are dynamic and flexible, allowing for the rotation of members according to the organization's needs. Although the elimination of hierarchical levels makes decision-making easier and increases the speed of work completion, its implementation faces challenges in the General Bureau, which has heterogeneous work and diverse human resources. In addition, operational costs are increased due to the demand for workspace and additional facilities for the Head of the Work Team. The implementation of the division of roles through the Roles and Outcomes

Matrix (MPPH) helps clarify employee responsibilities, although dynamic additional assignments require cross-team coordination. Leadership controls and interventions vary in each bureau, depending on job risk, task urgency, and available HR capacity, reflecting the organization's adaptation to the specific needs of each work unit.

4. 3. Dimensi Proses: *Rapid Decision of Learning Cycles*

The implementation of rapid iteration and continuous learning in public organizations such as the SETJEN KKP reflects efforts to adapt Agile principles into a more structured and regulated bureaucratic context. Rapid iteration allows teams to work in short cycles, resulting in products that can be evaluated and refined incrementally. However, in a public environment, where many products, such as regulations, have a wide impact and high risk, rapid iterations are still limited to internal processes before official publication. Internal discussions, team collaboration, and continuous evaluation are becoming common practices to minimize errors and ensure accurate results. Information transparency, supported by technologies like Google Drive and communication apps, accelerates data access and team collaboration. Leaders play a key role in creating a collaborative work environment, encouraging cross-generational learning, and facilitating adaptation to more flexible work processes. Despite challenges such as resistance to change and the demands of formal documentation, the internal iteration approach and open collaboration remain effective strategies to improve the quality of products and services at the SETJEN KKP. Thus, the combination of rapid iteration, active collaboration, information transparency, and adaptive leadership allows for the creation of more responsive and dynamic work processes, while still meeting high standards of precision in public services.

4. 4. Dimensi SDM: *Dynamic People Model That Ignites Passion*

The "People" dimension in agile organizations, according to Aghina, emphasizes the "Dynamic People Model That Ignites Passion," which puts individuals at the center of the organization in the hope of having a sense of ownership over the team's goals, decisions, and performance. In the SETJEN KKP, the implementation of this concept still faces the challenge of a hierarchical bureaucratic culture, although efforts to empower employees continue to be carried out through the role of leaders as facilitators who provide trust and encourage initiatives. The Head of Bureau plays a role in creating a work environment that supports creativity and responsibility, motivating employees through opportunities to appear and innovate, although leadership preferences for individuals with superior performance still occur. Human resource capacity building is carried out through training relevant to functional positions, both from internal training and external institutions, although time limitations and the availability of training are constraints. Career development is supported through role mobility, allowing employees to learn across teams according to competencies. However, the limitations of moving between functional positions are challenging, limiting career flexibility and the potential for future leaders' regeneration. Therefore, more flexible human resource management is needed to support the full implementation of the agile concept within the SETJEN KKP.

4. 5. Technology Dimensions: *Next-Generation Enabling Technology*

The application of agile principles in the SETJEN KKP requires the comprehensive integration of technology in every aspect of the organization to

support quick response to business needs and create added value. This transformation is realized through the Electronic-Based Government System (SPBE), regulated in Presidential Regulation Number 95 of 2018 and Ministerial Regulation Number 53 of 2021, which includes SPBE architecture, budget plans, business processes, data and information, infrastructure, and digital security. The implementation of SPBE includes electronic-based administrative and public services such as planning, finance, archiving, public complaints, and open data services. The use of digital applications such as SAKTI, PORTAL, and Google Drive supports cross-team collaboration, speeds up work processes, and overcomes human resource limitations. However, the use of technology is still more focused on internal collaboration between government agencies, while community involvement in making services is still limited. In the future, the technology development plan in the KKP is contained in the SPBE Plan Map stipulated through the KP Decree Number 175 of 2023, with the target of increasing the SPBE value to the "Very Good" category by 2024. The plan includes integrated SPBE governance, services, infrastructure, applications, and security, supporting adaptive and responsive data-driven decision-making, and fostering collaboration and innovation in the work environment. Structured implementation ensures the organization's readiness to face change while maintaining operational flexibility and agility.

CONCLUSION

This study shows that the application of agile principles in the SETJEN KKP after organizational simplification has resulted in positive changes in various organizational dimensions, although it still faces a number of challenges in its implementation. The strategy dimension includes successfully aligning the organization's vision with individual goals through performance dialogue, although technical regulations still hamper budget management. In the structural dimension, bureaucratic reduction and the formation of cross-functional teams improve collaboration and responsiveness, although challenges remain in units with significant headcount and low levels of human resources. Information transparency and work acceleration are increasing in the process dimension, even though rapid iterations have not been fully adopted. The HR dimension shows a change in the role of leaders to facilitators, although the mobility constraints of functional positions and the limitations of employee initiative are still obstacles. Technology integration through SPBE has accelerated the work process, although its implementation needs to be improved evenly across work units. To overcome this challenge, it is recommended that budget management be strengthened, cross-functional training increased, an agile work culture be established, and the implementation of SPBE be accelerated. Academic studies are also recommended to develop flexible budget governance models, analyze public organizational structures, and evaluate SPBE implementation to support innovation and performance improvement in the public sector.

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