

Political Stability and Infrastructure Governance for Sustainable Development: An Institutional Analysis of Local Government Support for Indonesia's Nusantara Capital City

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Abstract

This study examines how political stability, infrastructure governance, and sustainable development shape West Sulawesi's role as a supporting region for Indonesia's Nusantara Capital City, and its alignment with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDG 9 (Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure) and SDG 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities). Using a sequential mixed-methods design, it triangulates policy documents, interviews, and 100 news articles coded in NVivo 12 Plus. Findings indicate that infrastructure development, especially roads, ports, and energy systems, is the strongest policy driver, reinforced by local government coordination and public-private partnerships. Institutional reliability functions as governance capital, sustaining policy continuity and strengthening accountability. Nevertheless, sustainability integration remains partial, constraining progress towards SDG 9 Targets 9.1 and 9.4 and SDG 11 Targets 11.3, 11.6, and 11.b. Reliance on discourse-based evidence and a cross-sectional timeframe limits causal inference and long-term sustainability assessment. Future research should adopt longitudinal designs, comparative buffer-region analyses, and quantitative sustainability indicators.

Keywords: Infrastructure Governance; Institutional Analysis; Political Stability

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Introduction

Understanding how governance reliability, infrastructure readiness, and sustainability commitments interact is crucial for assessing whether West Sulawesi can effectively support the transformative agenda of Nusantara, Indonesia's new capital city. A robust governance system, supported by smart governance tools, law enforcement, and community participation, strengthens policy sustainability and accountability, which are fundamental to large-scale capital city transitions (Ardani et al., 2024; Julian Perdana, 2024; Mario et al., 2024). Advanced ICT infrastructure, including AI, IoT, and digital twins, can further enhance decision-making and operational efficiency, enabling Indonesia's new capital city to function as a data-driven and environmentally resilient capital (Sunindyo et al., 2025; Susantono et al., 2024). This capability is vital for translating West Sulawesi's fiscal improvements into strategic, long-term contributions to national development.

Furthermore, sustainability commitments, including green economic policies, ecological conservation, and community-based development, strengthen the social and environmental pillars of the new capital city ecosystem. Empirical evidence suggests that sustainability initiatives can improve economic performance while reducing socio-environmental risks, making them essential for resilient urban development (Fajri et al., 2024; Rahmat et al., 2025). Integrated planning across governance, infrastructure, and sustainability helps ensure that fiscal momentum is converted into sustained support for the forest city vision in the Nusantara region (Sari et al., 2025). In parallel, understanding public sentiment can help align development strategies with community expectations, strengthening legitimacy and long-term stability (Syabri et al., 2024). Together, these interdependent factors underscore the importance of West Sulawesi's readiness for the success of Indonesia's capital relocation.

The development of West Sulawesi Province is entering a critical phase as the region strengthens its position as a strategic buffer for the Nusantara Capital City. Over the 2020–2024 period, the province demonstrated consistent improvement in fiscal capacity, with regional revenues increasing from IDR 1.7 trillion in 2020 to approximately IDR 2.0 trillion in 2024 (Djpk.kemenkeu.go.id, 2025), as shown in Figure 1. Despite deficits in 2020–2021, the province recorded a budget surplus from 2022 onwards, indicating strengthened financial governance and fiscal discipline. This fiscal progress signals strengthening institutional maturity and a comparative advantage in maintaining budgetary stability, enhancing readiness to contribute to Indonesia's national development agenda. As the region closest to the new national capital within the Makassar Strait corridor, West Sulawesi's strategic maritime position, improving infrastructure base, and institutional reliability increasingly position the province as a resilient logistical and governance support system, shaping its effectiveness in supporting the Nusantara Capital City's long-term resilience and future-oriented sustainable development trajectory.

The ability of regional governments to maintain political and fiscal stability is widely recognised as a foundation for development. Institutional stability supports policy

continuity, investor confidence, and community participation in development programmes, and is widely acknowledged in international governance literature (Daugbjerg & Kay, 2020; Galik & Chelbi, 2021; Ullah et al., 2024), including studies across Southeast Asia and the Global South (Ashraf, 2024; Platje, 2008). In West Sulawesi, such stability enables major infrastructure programmes, including road improvements, port modernisation, and the expansion of energy networks, which are directly linked to regional productivity and logistics efficiency (Wibawa et al., 2021). Good governance and transparent financial management are prerequisites for stimulating public and private investment (Utami & Saputra, 2021). These conditions create an enabling environment for inclusive development aligned with the objectives of the Asta Cita Vision, which emphasises welfare enhancement, resource optimisation, and political stability, and with SDG 9 on reliable infrastructure and SDG 11 on inclusive and sustainable regional planning. Incorporating SDG-based considerations strengthens the policy relevance of governance reforms and highlights West Sulawesi's position within broader Global South sustainability challenges.

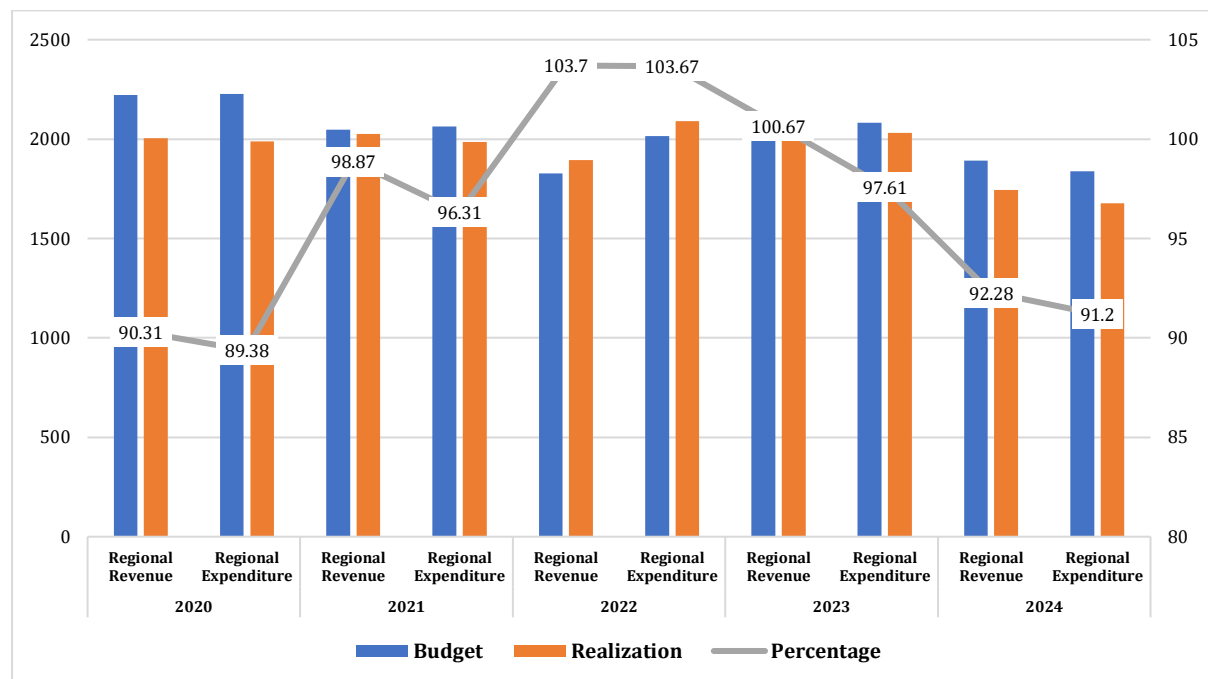


Figure 1. Revenue and Expenditure of West Sulawesi Province
Source: djpk.kemenkeu.go.id (2025)

Empirical studies indicate that participatory and collaborative governance can strengthen policy implementation at the local level. For instance, Saputra et al. (2022) showed that empowering Village-Owned Enterprises in Majene strengthened local economic linkages and reduced rural dependency. Similarly, Saputra et al. (2023) demonstrated that collaborative governance practices in Polewali Mandar improved coordination among government, business actors, and civil society, promoting more equitable regional growth. These findings suggest that inclusive governance mechanisms

can support interregional connectivity and social legitimacy, both of which are vital for West Sulawesi's role as a functional buffer for the Nusantara Capital City. The integration of participatory development principles within regional planning frameworks also aligns with the sustainable development paradigm promoted by the United Nations, emphasising accountability, inclusiveness, and environmental responsibility. It is also consistent with international evidence that participatory governance improves institutional performance in Global South regions experiencing limitations in capacity, resource distribution, and policy coordination. Furthermore, these governance practices contribute to SDG 11.3 on inclusive and sustainable regional planning and SDG 16.7 on participatory and representative decision-making.

However, the existing literature reveals several gaps. While research on infrastructure and governance in Indonesia has expanded (Widodo et al., 2024; Yogi et al., 2024), few studies have systematically analysed the interaction between political stability, infrastructure capacity, and sustainable development within the specific context of a capital city's buffer region. Most prior works focus on either macroeconomic outcomes (Ray & Ing, 2016) or local governance innovations (Saputra et al., 2023), without examining how regional governance dynamics translate policy impacts into sustainability agendas or how these dynamics compare with similar challenges in Global South buffer regions facing institutional and fiscal constraints. Similarly, studies on the Nusantara Capital City (Susantono et al., 2024; Putri et al., 2024) have predominantly explored digital transformation and smart city governance, with limited analysis of how peripheral provinces, such as West Sulawesi, operationalise national directives into coherent regional strategies or align them with SDG 9 Targets 9.1 (Quality, Reliable, Sustainable, and Resilient Infrastructure) and 9.4 (Sustainable Infrastructure and Industrial Upgrading), and SDG 11 Targets 11.3 (Inclusive and Sustainable Urbanization), 11.6 (Reducing the Environmental Impact of Cities), and 11.b (Integrated Policies for Climate Resilience). Therefore, a critical gap remains regarding the policy coherence and actor coordination required to translate infrastructure momentum into sustainable outcomes and to ensure SDG-relevant governance performance in emerging capital-region ecosystems across the Global South.

This study advances the state of the art by integrating political stability, infrastructure development, and sustainability governance into a unified analytical framework. It employs text mining and network analysis to identify key relationships among actors, themes, and policies in West Sulawesi's development discourse. Unlike previous studies that rely solely on quantitative economic indicators or institutional assessments, this study uses a corpus-based mixed-methods approach to examine how discourse from policy documents, elite interviews, and media reporting converges into a coherent policy narrative. By combining computational linguistic analysis (Hai-Jew, 2016; Niedbalski & Ślęzak, 2022) with governance theory, this study offers an enhanced explanation of how institutional interactions shape SDG-relevant policy alignment, particularly within emerging governance configurations in Global South buffer regions.

The scientific novelty of this study lies in its conceptualisation of institutional stability as governance capital that mediates between infrastructure expansion and

sustainable outcomes. This perspective departs from conventional growth-oriented models by framing stability not merely as a condition for development, but as a strategic resource that shapes the legitimacy and continuity of policy implementation (Ştefanachi & Grecu, 2025). Through NVivo-assisted semantic mapping and Kendall's coefficient for cross-source consensus, this study empirically measures how aligned policy narratives are across government documents, political statements, and media coverage, and how this alignment contributes to SDG coherence, particularly SDG 9 and SDG 11. The resulting framework introduces an innovative way to assess how regions such as West Sulawesi can balance rapid infrastructure acceleration with socio-environmental safeguards, aligning with the sustainable and inclusive mandates of the Nusantara Capital City (Khan et al., 2025; Gottenhuber et al., 2023) and reflecting broader governance challenges faced by Global South buffer regions.

Based on the identified gaps and novelty statement, this study aims to examine how political stability, infrastructure capacity, and sustainability governance interact to shape West Sulawesi's role as a buffer for the Nusantara Capital City. Specifically, it investigates the degree of coherence between local and national planning instruments, evaluates actor relationships and influence patterns, and identifies policy levers to strengthen sustainability as an *ex ante* condition of development. This study hypothesises that regions with higher political coherence and stronger institutional capital are more capable of converting infrastructure momentum into sustainable and socially legitimate outcomes. Ultimately, this study aims to contribute to evidence-based policymaking by providing a replicable analytical model for evaluating the readiness of regional governance systems to support the sustainable transformation of Indonesia's new capital ecosystem.

Research Methods

This study uses a sequential mixed-methods approach, structured within a clearly defined research framework, to map political stability and infrastructure governance in West Sulawesi as a buffer region for Indonesia's Nusantara Capital City. The framework operationalises the scientific method through sequential stages of data collection, pre-processing, qualitative interpretation, quantitative validation, and integrative visualisation, as illustrated in Figure 2. The units of analysis comprise policy documents, transcripts of elite interviews, and online news content from 2024 to 2025. NVivo 12 Plus was used as the primary analytical tool to manage the corpus, develop coding schemes, and ensure the traceability of analytical decisions (AlYahmady & Al Abri, 2013; Feng & Behar-Horenstein, 2019; Mortelmans, 2019; Niedbalski & Ślęzak, 2022). The qualitative stage identifies themes and relationships between concepts through systematic coding and semantic clustering, whereas the quantitative stage normalises coding weights into composite indicators to enable empirical validation and cross-source comparison (Andrade et al., 2020; Robertson, 2008). Outputs from both stages are integrated within the research framework to produce a map of priority issues, an assessment of cross-

source consensus, and an actor–theme relationship matrix for subsequent policy-oriented visualisation.

Table 1. Informant Categories
Source: Processed by the Authors (2025)

Informant Category	Total
Regional Development Planning Agency (Head of the Regional Development Planning Agency and Senior Planner)	2
Sectoral Infrastructure Agencies (Senior Technical Officials)	4
Regional People’s Representative Council (Commission members responsible for development and budgeting)	3
Regional Academics (Experts in public policy and regional development)	3
Civil Society Representatives (Environmental and community-based organisations)	2
Total Informants	14

Primary data were collected through semi-structured interviews with fourteen (14) key informants, as presented in Table 1. Informants were purposively selected based on their strategic roles within the governance–infrastructure–sustainability framework. Interviews were recorded with consent, transcribed verbatim, anonymised, and imported into NVivo 12 Plus (Mortelmans, 2019). Secondary data include local and national planning instruments, regulations, and press releases, as well as 100 news articles harvested using NCapture and cleaned for duplicates (Chan et al., 2018; Lawton, 2019; Natow, 2019). Metadata on time, agency, and media type were normalised to ensure analytical comparability across data sources and informant categories. Research ethics protocols, including informed consent and data protection, were followed. The final corpus was organised by theme, actor, and location in alignment with the proposed research framework and informant structure, facilitating systematic searching and transparent, periodic reporting of qualitative findings.

Analysis was conducted in stages using NVivo 12 Plus, following the structured research framework presented in Figure 2. First, text pre-processing (lowercasing, tokenisation, stop words, stemming) generated frequency counts and co-occurrence terms, which were visualised as a word cloud to map dominant topics and semantic axes as an exploratory step. Second, coding weights per theme were calculated from cross-source coverage, normalised to a 0–1 scale, and Kendall’s tau was computed as a measure of consensus to validate qualitative interpretations. The resulting scores were visualised using a radar chart. Third, an actor–theme correlation matrix was constructed from directed coding weights for network analysis, and degree, betweenness, and modularity were calculated to identify key nodes and interaction patterns within the governance network. The entire procedure was replicated, stored in an audit trail, and tested for

intercoder agreement to ensure methodological rigour and reproducibility. Validity was strengthened through data triangulation, member checking, verification of results, and replication within an integrated scientific framework.

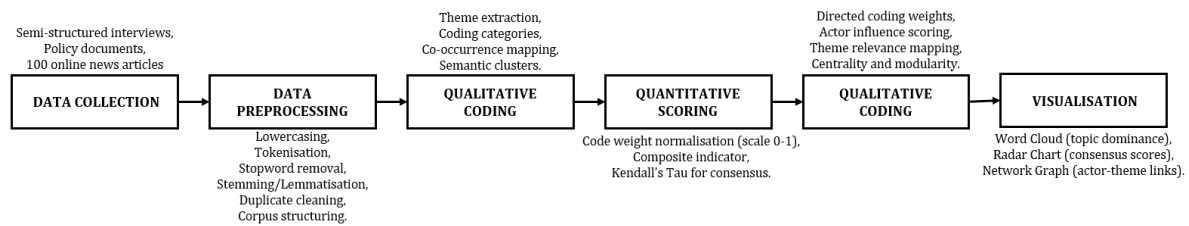


Figure 2. Data Analysis Process
Source: Processed by the Authors (2025)

Figure 2 illustrates the sequential application of the scientific method, from data collection and pre-processing to qualitative interpretation, quantitative validation, and policy-oriented visualisation, to examine political stability, infrastructure governance, and sustainable development in West Sulawesi.

Results and Discussion

Word Cloud Analysis

Thematic mapping using word clouds generated from coded data in NVivo 12 Plus provides the preliminary findings. Word clouds offer an effective way to visualise the frequency and co-occurrence of words (Hai-Jew, 2016; McNaught & Lam, 2010). They provide an overview of the most frequently used terms across the corpus of policy documents, interviews, and news articles, as shown in Figure 3. The larger and thicker a word appears, the more frequently it occurs in the text, which often indicates dominant topics in the discourse. As an exploratory tool, word clouds can help researchers identify topic trends, map narrative themes across multiple sources, and select candidate categories for subsequent coding and analysis.

Figure 3 indicates that the main semantic axis of the corpus centres on the triad of “West Sulawesi, IKN, Development”, supported by prominent terms such as “Region”, “Government”, and “Program”. The salience of “infrastructure”, “connectivity”, and terms related to “ports” and “energy” suggests that West Sulawesi’s supporting role is primarily framed in terms of strengthening logistics and mobility. This supports Rahmat et al. (2025) and Widodo et al. (2024), who emphasised infrastructure as a foundation for regional sustainability. It also aligns with Putri et al. (2024), Susantono et al. (2024), and Yogi et al. (2024), who highlight the importance of digital transformation, smart city development, and public–private partnerships in promoting connected and sustainable urban growth.

The lexical cluster “Politics, National Unity, Stability, Governor, Government, and Program” positions political stability as a form of institutional capital that enables

effective governance and sustained policy implementation. This is consistent with Ashraf (2024) and Platje (2008), who argued that institutional quality and governance stability are crucial for achieving sustainable development. The prominence of the Regional Leadership Coordination Forum points to strengthened coordination between central and regional actors, aligning with Ștefanachi and Grecu (2025), who note that accountability and intergovernmental cooperation enhance project delivery. Meanwhile, the presence of terms such as “community”, “environment”, “mining”, and “conflict” underscores the importance of social legitimacy and public acceptance as safeguards against socio-ecological contestation, supporting inclusive and stable development outcomes. In addition, terms such as “green”, “sustainable”, “energy”, and “region” suggest that sustainable development language has been incorporated into official and media discourse, although it remains largely normative.



Infrastructure development is a key determinant of Nusantara's readiness as Indonesia's new capital city, as reflected in the strong infrastructure dimension shown in Figure 4. Recent studies suggest that a sustainable ICT framework integrating artificial intelligence (AI), the Internet of Things (IoT), and big data can enhance service efficiency

and environmental resilience (Sunindyo et al., 2025). In parallel, 5G Open RAN can strengthen government operations and digital governance (Rahmawati et al., 2025). Integrated green transport systems, including electric ships, can also support mobility and emissions reduction (Syahr et al., 2024), complemented by data-driven construction management to strengthen project reliability (Yogi et al., 2024). A supportive legal and regulatory framework further underpins infrastructure governance and alignment with national strategic priorities (Priyanta & Zulkarnain, 2023). Collectively, these factors can improve regional connectivity between the archipelago and buffer regions such as West Sulawesi.

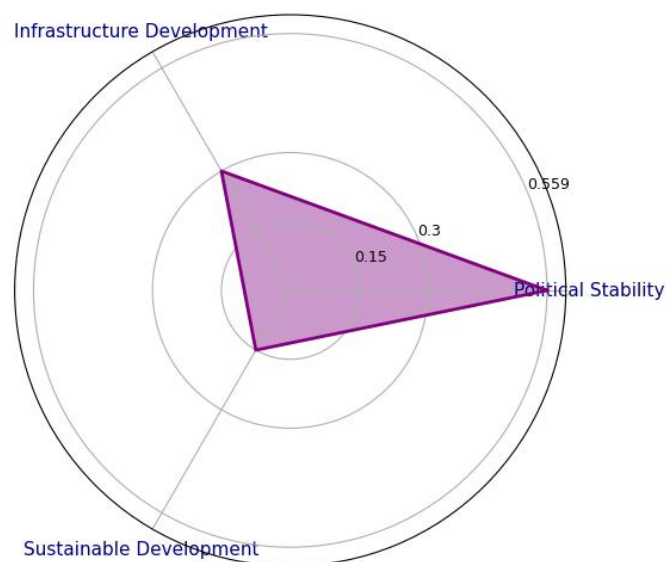


Figure 4. Kendall's Radar Chart Results

Source: Processed by the Authors Using NVivo 12 Plus (2025)

Sustainable development and political stability are also essential to achieving a balanced development pathway. The design of Nusantara as a green and smart city emphasises ecological conservation, green mobility, and circular economy initiatives (Julian Perdana, 2024; Rachmawati, Haryono, et al., 2024), supported by human resource synergies and logistics optimisation (Suprayitno, 2025), and community empowerment through ecotourism (Sari et al., 2025). Political stability can reinforce policy continuity through a robust governance framework and stakeholder engagement (Julian Perdana, 2024; Rachmawati, Reinhart, et al., 2024), while public sentiment, generally positive but dynamic, shapes legitimacy and public support (Syabri et al., 2024). Key challenges include environmental impacts, funding constraints, and policy inconsistency, which require cross-sector collaboration and regulatory innovation (Irmawaty et al., 2025; Razak et al., 2024). Together, these enabling factors provide the institutional and developmental foundations for the long-term resilience of Indonesia's Nusantara Capital City.

The findings indicate that infrastructure development in West Sulawesi strongly supports its role as a buffer for Nusantara, Indonesia's new national capital city. With a Kendall score of 0.559, the emphasis on ports, roads, and energy infrastructure reflects consistent policy alignment and coordinated support across actors. This is consistent with Gani et al. (2022), who highlighted the region's economic resilience through marine and diversified resources. It also supports Utama et al. (2021) and Wibawa et al. (2021), who emphasised the importance of public-private partnerships and sustainable energy initiatives in regional development. However, as in Ray and Ing (2016), infrastructure gaps remain a key challenge for equitable growth.

By contrast, political stability (0.261) shows a medium-to-low level of agreement, indicating that coordination among elites and institutions, including the Regional Leadership Coordination Forum, the regional legislature, and central-regional actors, remains uneven and is shaped by electoral dynamics and sector-specific issues such as mining permits and spatial planning. This aligns with Bitassa et al. (2025) and Qamruzzaman and Karim (2024), who noted that political instability can weaken environmental governance and reduce investor confidence in sustainable projects. Sustainable development (0.180) records the lowest consensus, indicating weak alignment between green narratives and field practices. This supports Ge and Chen (2025) and Zhou and Tou (2025), who argue that politically unstable environments hinder policy coordination and cross-regional environmental cooperation. This also suggests that instability can constrain green innovation, renewable energy adoption, and institutional commitment to sustainability goals.

Actor-Factor Relationships for Indonesia's Nusantara Capital City

Relationships between actors and supporting factors shaping political stability, infrastructure, and sustainable development in West Sulawesi, as a buffer region for the Nusantara Capital City, are illustrated in Figure 5. The figure shows the intensity and direction of interactions among key actors. Local governments, politicians, the private sector, and civil society interact through coordination, regulation, financing, and the production of social legitimacy, reflecting multilevel dynamics identified in research on investment governance and sustainable development (Hernawan, 2023; Subair et al., 2025; Susanti et al., 2025). This network channels connectivity and logistics agendas to the national level while receiving feedback on sustainability standards, enabling an assessment of influence, key nodes, and coordination gaps. It also supports the development of a coherent strategy centred on policy synchronisation, environmental security, and public participation, to ensure that infrastructure expansion translates into sustainable outcomes with minimal political risk (Nugrahaning et al., 2023).

Figure 5 suggests that the Nusantara Capital City functions as an intermediary node linking infrastructure policy to the sustainable development agenda in West Sulawesi. The strong influence from infrastructure development to the Nusantara Capital City (0.66–0.68) indicates that the effectiveness of the buffer function depends largely on the quality of port, road, and energy connectivity. This supports Gani et al. (2022) and Jatayu et al. (2024), who highlighted the critical role of infrastructure in promoting regional

integration and growth. The moderate flow from the Nusantara Capital City to sustainable development (0.37) and weak regulatory feedback (0.18) align with Yenita and Soegiarso (2024), indicating that green policies remain more normative than transformative in guiding investment and spatial planning.

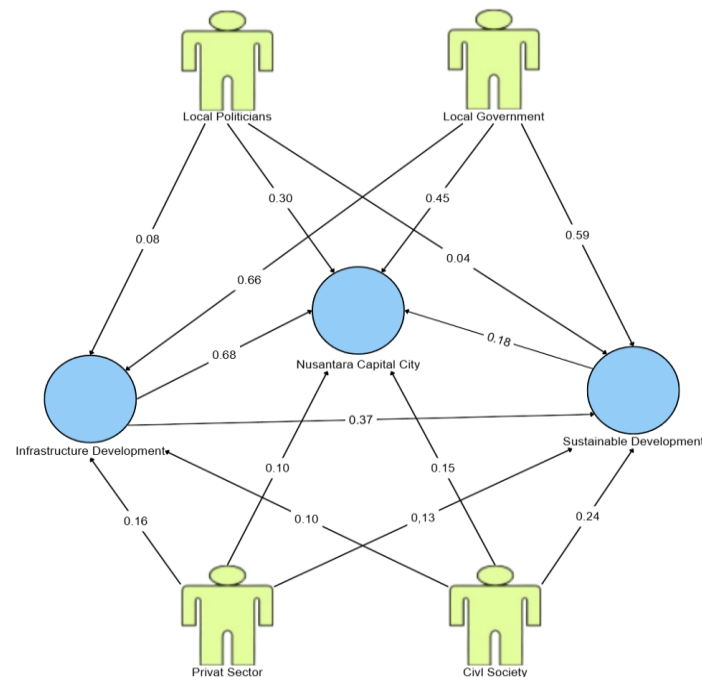


Figure 5. Actor Network Analysis Results

Source: Processed by the Authors Using NVivo 12 Plus (2025)

From an actor perspective, the regional government emerges as the dominant policy driver, exerting strong influence on infrastructure (0.45) and sustainability (0.59) through planning, coordination, and governance innovation, including digital reporting systems. This aligns with Choi (2021), Medina and Huete García (2020), and Mello and Ter-Minassian (2024), who emphasise the role of subnational governments in directing sustainable infrastructure through institutional capacity and planning effectiveness. Local politicians primarily shape agendas relating to the Nusantara Capital City (0.30), with limited direct involvement in technical implementation, consistent with Bossuyt and Savini (2018), who note that political legitimacy often outweighs technical execution. Civil society's moderate influence on sustainability (0.24) underscores its role in supporting social acceptance and reducing socio-environmental friction.

Two policy implications follow. First, ensuring coherence between the West Sulawesi Regional Medium-Term Development Plan, the National Medium-Term Development Plan, and the Nusantara Capital City Authority plans is essential to align projects, including ports, interregional connectivity, and renewable energy, with measurable financing schemes. This supports Gottenhuber et al. (2023) and Kalonga et al. (2025), who emphasised that coherent multilevel planning is fundamental for achieving sustainable infrastructure outcomes. Second, sustainability should be treated

as a precondition through environmental impact assessments, biodiversity safeguards, and just transition measures. This aligns with Khan et al. (2025), who argue that integrating environmental governance into infrastructure planning strengthens accountability and policy resilience.

Alignment with the Sustainable Development Goals

This study aligns substantively with the Sustainable Development Goals, particularly SDG 9 and SDG 11, by examining how political stability and infrastructure governance shape sustainable development outcomes in West Sulawesi as a strategic buffer for Indonesia's Nusantara Capital City. The findings show that transport connectivity, port systems, and energy networks function as the primary policy drivers, directly supporting SDG 9.1 on reliable and resilient infrastructure and SDG 9.4 on sustainable infrastructure upgrading through innovation and institutional capacity (Wibawa et al., 2021; Jatayu et al., 2024; Putri et al., 2024; Yogi et al., 2024). The role of public-private partnerships and digital infrastructure governance also reflects institutional support mechanisms emphasised in SDG 9.a, particularly in Global South contexts where fiscal and technical constraints remain significant (Sunindyo et al., 2025; Susantono et al., 2024).

With respect to SDG 11, the analysis indicates that political stability and institutional reliability function as governance capital that supports coordinated and inclusive regional planning, aligning with SDG 11.3 on participatory and integrated spatial development. Actor network analysis highlights the mediating roles of local governments and civil society in translating national capital city strategies into regionally grounded development practices, thereby strengthening policy legitimacy and social acceptance (Saputra et al., 2023; Syabri et al., 2024). However, the relatively low consensus on sustainability integration indicates that environmental protection and energy transition initiatives remain largely normative, revealing gaps in operationalising SDG 11.6 and SDG 11.b in relation to environmental impact reduction and resilience-oriented planning (Ge & Chen, 2025; Zhou & Tou, 2025). Overall, the study underscores that achieving SDG targets in capital-region ecosystems requires stable institutions, coherent multilevel governance, and enforceable sustainability mechanisms, rather than infrastructure expansion alone (Platje, 2008; Gottenhuber et al., 2023; Khan et al., 2025).

Conclusion

This study concludes that political stability, infrastructure capacity, and sustainability governance jointly shape West Sulawesi's effectiveness as a strategic buffer region for Indonesia's new capital city. Integrating policy documents, elite interviews, and media discourse through NVivo-based analysis indicates that infrastructure development, particularly ports, roads, and energy systems, constitutes the strongest linkage in the policy network. Political stability, in turn, functions as institutional capital that supports policy coherence and implementation. The findings support the hypothesis that regions with stable governance and coordinated institutions are better able to

translate infrastructure expansion into sustainable, inclusive, and legitimate development outcomes that advance SDG 9 Targets 9.1 (quality, reliable, sustainable and resilient infrastructure) and 9.4 (sustainable infrastructure and industrial upgrading), and SDG 11 Targets 11.3 (inclusive and sustainable urbanisation), 11.6 (reducing the environmental impact of cities), and 11.b (integrated policies for climate resilience). Overall, the analysis suggests that institutional reliability, rather than infrastructure alone, is central to long-term resilience in capital-region support systems.

The study also finds that sustainability integration remains limited, as green principles and energy transition commitments are expressed more normatively than operationally. This highlights the need for stronger environmental safeguards, just transition measures, and transparent multilevel coordination mechanisms. However, the analysis is constrained by reliance on discourse-based and cross-sectional data, which limits causal inference, longitudinal assessment, and the direct measurement of sustainability outcomes. The single-case focus on West Sulawesi also restricts the generalisability of the findings. Future research should extend the framework through longitudinal and comparative analysis across multiple buffer regions, incorporate quantitative environmental and social performance indicators, and examine institutional change over time. Such work would strengthen the evidence base for governance-driven sustainable development in Global South capital-region contexts.

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