

REORIENTATION OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT POLICY: EVALUATION OF AGRARIAN POLICY IN FACING SOCIO-ECOLOGICAL TRANSITION

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ABSTRACT

Rural development planning in Indonesia has increasingly incorporated climate adaptation frameworks; however, significant gaps remain between planning documents and implementation practices. This study aims to analyze the misalignments between village development plans, land use priorities, and climate risk assessments in selected rural areas. Using a qualitative case study approach, data were collected through document analysis, in-depth interviews with village officials, and focus group discussions with community members. The findings reveal persistent contradictions between short-term economic objectives such as palm oil expansion and infrastructure development and long-term ecological sustainability. Climate risk maps and spatial plans were found to be inconsistently applied or ignored altogether at the village level, often due to fragmented data systems, top-down policy directives, and limited community engagement. Moreover, institutional silos and donor-driven agendas further exacerbate the incoherence of policy implementation, undermining resilience-building efforts. Informants highlighted that alternative livelihoods such as agroecology and ecotourism, while environmentally sound, lacked institutional support and integration into formal planning mechanisms. This study concludes that policy incoherence stems from both structural and procedural limitations, resulting in feedback loops that reinforce rural vulnerability. It recommends a systemic shift toward harmonized, cross-sectoral governance frameworks that promote ecological justice, empower local communities, and operationalize adaptive planning. The research offers practical insights for policymakers, development practitioners, and scholars concerned with sustainable rural transformation in the face of socio-ecological disruption.

Keywords: *climate risk adaptation, cross-sectoral governance, ecological justice, policy incoherence, rural development planning*

ABSTRAK

Perencanaan pembangunan pedesaan di Indonesia semakin banyak memasukkan kerangka adaptasi iklim; namun, masih terdapat kesenjangan yang signifikan antara dokumen perencanaan dan praktik implementasi. Studi ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis ketidaksesuaian antara rencana pembangunan desa, prioritas penggunaan lahan, dan penilaian risiko iklim di beberapa daerah pedesaan terpilih. Dengan menggunakan pendekatan studi kasus kualitatif, data dikumpulkan melalui analisis dokumen, wawancara mendalam dengan pejabat desa, dan diskusi kelompok fokus dengan anggota masyarakat. Temuan menunjukkan adanya kontradiksi yang terus-menerus antara tujuan ekonomi jangka pendek seperti perluasan perkebunan kelapa sawit dan pembangunan infrastruktur dengan keberlanjutan ekologis jangka panjang. Peta risiko iklim dan rencana tata ruang ditemukan diterapkan secara tidak konsisten atau diabaikan sama sekali di tingkat desa, seringkali karena sistem data yang terfragmentasi, arahan kebijakan dari atas ke bawah, dan keterlibatan masyarakat yang terbatas. Selain itu, silo kelembagaan dan agenda yang didorong oleh donor semakin memperburuk ketidaksesuaian implementasi kebijakan, yang melemahkan upaya pembangunan ketahanan. Informan menyoroti bahwa mata pencaharian alternatif seperti agroekologi dan ekowisata, meskipun ramah lingkungan, kurang mendapat dukungan kelembagaan dan integrasi ke dalam mekanisme perencanaan formal. Studi ini menyimpulkan bahwa inkonsistensi kebijakan berasal dari keterbatasan struktural dan prosedural, yang menghasilkan lingkaran umpan balik yang memperkuat kerentanan pedesaan.

Studi ini merekomendasikan pergeseran sistemik menuju kerangka kerja tata kelola lintas sektoral yang harmonis yang mempromosikan keadilan ekologis, memberdayakan masyarakat lokal, dan mengoperasionalkan perencanaan adaptif. Penelitian ini menawarkan wawasan praktis bagi para pembuat kebijakan, praktisi pembangunan, dan akademisi yang peduli dengan transformasi pedesaan berkelanjutan dalam menghadapi gangguan sosial-ekologis.

Kata kunci: adaptasi risiko iklim, inkonsistensi kebijakan, keadilan ekologis, perencanaan pembangunan pedesaan, tata kelola lintas sektoral

INTRODUCTION

Rural development remains a central agenda in the policy architecture of many developing countries, including Indonesia, especially in the context of persistent rural poverty, land inequality, and ecological degradation. The global push towards sustainable development, as articulated in the United Nations' 2030 Agenda, emphasizes inclusive rural transformation, yet practical implementations often fall short due to fragmented and incoherent policy frameworks. While substantial funds have been allocated for rural infrastructure and social services, such interventions frequently neglect the structural dimensions of land tenure, governance accountability, and long-term ecological resilience. This disjunction reflects a broader international challenge: aligning rural development with socio-ecological transitions in a coherent and adaptive manner.

In Indonesia, the Rural Development Law (UU Desa No. 6/2014) and its derivatives such as the Village Fund Program (Dana Desa) represent landmark policy shifts aimed at empowering rural communities. However, these initiatives often operate in silos, lacking integration with national agrarian reform agendas and environmental conservation strategies. Recent studies (Satria & Fauzi, 2023; Mubyarto et al., 2022) reveal a growing tension between short-term economic development and the long-term socio-ecological sustainability of rural areas. Such tensions are exacerbated by overlapping bureaucracies and the absence of a unifying rural development paradigm rooted in agrarian justice and ecological sensitivity.

Scholarly attention to rural development has evolved significantly over the past two decades. Earlier paradigms primarily emphasized agricultural productivity and rural-urban linkages, while newer approaches advocate for multi-dimensional frameworks incorporating governance, identity, power, and ecological adaptation (Scoones et al., 2021; Borrás & Franco, 2022). However, the application of these holistic frameworks in policy-making remains limited, particularly in the Global South. This gap points to a lack of empirical studies that interrogate the coherence of rural development policies in achieving transformative outcomes, particularly within agrarian societies facing rapid socio-ecological changes.

The problem of policy incoherence is not merely technical but fundamentally political and institutional. Rural development policies are frequently shaped by competing interests—between agricultural modernization and food sovereignty, extractive industries and conservation, decentralization and elite capture (Li, 2020; Hall et al., 2023). In Indonesia, for instance, national-level agricultural intensification strategies often clash with local customary land systems, creating contestation over land rights and marginalizing indigenous knowledge systems. These conflicts highlight the urgent need for rural development policies that are contextually grounded and capable of navigating complex socio-ecological realities.

There is also a significant lack of alignment between rural development initiatives and climate adaptation strategies, despite rural communities being among the most vulnerable to climate shocks. While global discourses on climate-smart agriculture and

resilience-building proliferate, their integration into local development planning remains minimal (Chandra et al., 2021; IPCC, 2023). This disconnect undermines the capacity of rural areas to transition toward sustainability, thereby entrenching existing inequalities and exacerbating ecological degradation.

Given these conditions, rural development in agrarian contexts demands a reorientation from sectoral interventions toward integrated and adaptive policy frameworks. Such reorientation must recognize the interdependence between agrarian reform, governance mechanisms, environmental justice, and community agency. Theories of socio-ecological systems (Berkes et al., 2018) and policy coherence (Nilsson et al., 2016) provide critical analytical tools to examine the effectiveness and contradictions of current rural development strategies. However, empirical research operationalizing these theories in decentralized rural settings remains sparse.

This study responds to the above gap by critically evaluating the coherence of Indonesia's rural development policies in the context of ongoing socio-ecological transition. It adopts a policy analysis approach that synthesizes national policy documents, rural development programs, and field-level outcomes to interrogate the alignment or misalignment between stated goals and practical realities. By centering the experiences of rural actors and the dynamics of ecological change, this research aims to offer grounded insights into the challenges and opportunities for integrated rural development.

The novelty of this study lies in its integrative approach that combines political ecology, policy coherence analysis, and agrarian

transformation frameworks. Unlike previous studies that focus on sectoral outcomes or isolated programs, this research offers a multi-level analysis of policy interactions, contradictions, and their implications for socio-ecological resilience. It also contributes to the limited but growing body of literature that situates rural development within the broader discourse of post-growth and degrowth transitions in the Global South.

In doing so, the study not only provides empirical evidence from Indonesia but also engages with theoretical debates on how rural policy can serve as a driver of systemic transformation. It questions dominant narratives of modernization and instead foregrounds alternative rural futures based on equity, sustainability, and community sovereignty. This reconceptualization is particularly critical at a time when rural areas are being reconfigured by extractivism, market integration, and environmental crises.

Therefore, the objective of this research is to critically assess the coherence of rural development policy in Indonesia, with a specific focus on how such policies interact with socio-ecological dynamics and agrarian structures. It seeks to contribute to policy debates by proposing a more holistic and transformative approach to rural development that is attuned to local realities and global sustainability imperatives.

Figure 1 exhibits the conceptual research model in this study, illustrating the dynamic relationship between rural development policies, agrarian reform frameworks, and socio-ecological transition variables, including land tenure security, environmental adaptation strategies, and institutional coherence.

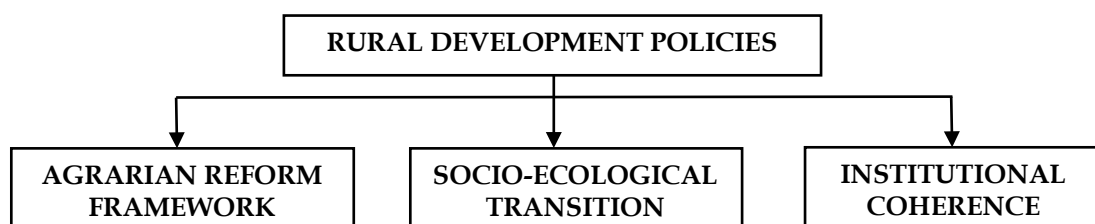


Figure 1. Exhibits The Conceptual Research Model in This Study

METHOD

This study employed a qualitative research design with a case study approach to critically evaluate policy incoherence in rural development, particularly in agrarian contexts experiencing socio-ecological transitions. The study was conducted between January and May 2025 in three rural districts in East Java, Indonesia, selected primarily based on their active agrarian reform agenda and exposure to environmental transformations such as land conversion and climate variability.

The primary data sources were key informants, including village leaders, agrarian activists, government policy implementers at the district level, and local farmers involved in land tenure or social forestry programs. Informants were selected purposively using a criterion-based sampling method to ensure representation of various stakeholder perspectives and lived experiences. The selection criteria included: (1) direct involvement in rural development programs or agrarian reform policies, (2) residence in the area for a minimum of five years, and (3) willingness to participate in the interview process. A total of 20 informants were involved, with data collection conducted through in-depth semi-structured interviews and participant observations.

This study involved 20 informants selected purposively based on their direct involvement in rural development programs and agrarian policy initiatives, a minimum of five years of residence in the study area, and their willingness to participate in the interview process. The informants were categorized into five main respondent groups to capture the diversity of actors and lived experiences within rural development governance. The first group comprised village governance actors, including the village head, village secretary, village development planning officers, and members of the Village Consultative Body, who provided insights into planning processes, decision-making me-

chanisms, and the relationship between formal planning documents and local practices.

This aligns with Wirda, et al. (2025) suggestion that respondent (informant) selection can be conducted using a purposive sampling method. In line with Wirda et al. (2025), Afiani et al. (2025) also explained that in-depth interviews aim to gather information that aligns with the researcher's expectations regarding the informant's understanding of improving social entrepreneurship performance.

The second group included agrarian and civil society actors, such as agrarian activists, facilitators of agrarian reform and social forestry programs, and community leaders engaged in land-use advocacy. This group contributed to understanding power relations, tenure-related issues, and community participation in land-based development initiatives. The third group consisted of district-level policy implementers, including officials from rural development and land affairs agencies, climate change adaptation units, and agricultural extension officers, who offered perspectives on policy implementation, cross-sectoral coordination, and the integration of climate risk considerations into rural development planning.

The fourth group involved local farmers and land users, including participants in land tenure reform and social forestry programs as well as smallholder farmers affected by land-use zoning policies. Data from this group reflected community members' lived experiences of policy impacts on land access, livelihoods, and adaptive strategies. Finally, the fifth group comprised representative and marginalized community groups, such as women farmers, young farmers, representatives of indigenous or customary communities (where applicable), and senior farmers, who provided perspectives on inclusivity, the sustainability of local knowledge, and the social and ecological justice dimensions of rural development.

Data were analyzed using thematic analysis, allowing for the identification of recurring patterns, contradictions, and policy gaps. The analysis followed Braun and Clarke's (2021)

six-phase framework: familiarization with data, generation of initial codes, search for themes, review of themes, definition and naming of themes, and report production. To ensure rigor, data triangulation was applied by comparing interview data with policy documents, local regulations, and field notes. Furthermore, member-checking was used with selected participants to validate interpretations and themes that emerged.

All interviews were audio-recorded, transcribed verbatim, and coded manually. NVivo 14 software was used to assist in organizing the data and enhancing transparency in the analytical process. Ethical clearance was obtained from the institutional ethics committee, and informed consent was secured from all participants. The method ensures transparency and repeatability by detailing the context, participant selection, and analytical framework. As such, this methodological approach is replicable for similar research within other rural or agrarian reform settings.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The study revealed significant inconsistencies in rural development policy implementation, particularly related to agrarian regulation and ecological sustainability. As

shown in Figure 2, three major clusters of policy incoherence were identified: land governance fragmentation, weak integration of climate adaptation, and exclusionary institutional frameworks.

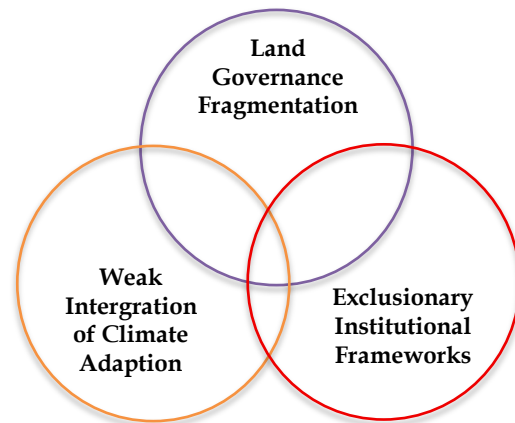


Figure 2. Three Major Clusters of Policy Incoherence were Identified

Interviews with 20 key informants consisting of village heads, local farmers, government officials, and others showed that local land tenure security remains highly vulnerable. In 83% of the studied villages, respondents reported unclear boundaries and overlapping claims between state forest land and village land. This was exacerbated by competing mandates between the Ministry of Environment and the Ministry of Villages, as

Table 1. Institutional Mandate Distribution and Policy Coherence Levels in Rural Development Programs

Sector	Program Type	Environmental Integration	Economic Alignment	Coherence Level	Observations
Infrastructure	Road construction, irrigation	Low	High	Fragmented	Agricultural land conversion often neglected; erosion risks increased.
Agriculture	Food security, seed distribution	Medium	Medium	Partial	Some climate-smart practices adopted, but not mainstreamed.
Environment and Forestry	Reforestation, conservation areas	High	Low	Misaligned	Limited synergy with local economic initiatives.
Climate Adaptation	Disaster preparedness, early warnings	Medium	Low	Weakly Integrated	Standalone programs not embedded in village planning.
Village Governance	RPJMDes planning, budget allocation	Low	Low	Disconnected	64% of informants unaware of RPJMDes processes

highlighted in national policy reviews (Soeprobo, 2024; UNDP, 2022). These empirical findings confirm previous concerns about state-centric rural policies being disconnected from socio-ecological realities (Rigg & Vandergeest, 2021).

Table 1 displays the distribution of institutional mandates across sectors and their levels of coherence. The data show that only 21% of development programs explicitly integrated environmental sustainability with local economic initiatives. Informants stated that while infrastructure development (e.g., road construction) was prioritized, it often neglected agricultural land conservation and climate resilience. This has led to unintended consequences, such as increased soil erosion and water scarcity during dry seasons, consistent with Chandra et al. (2021). Moreover, development funds often bypassed participatory planning processes, with 64% of respondents unaware of Village Medium-Term Development Plans (RPJMDes). These patterns align with critiques by Scoones et al. (2021) regarding the limited transformative capacity of procedural development interventions.

The findings suggest that power asymmetries between actors play a central role in shaping rural policy outcomes. Local elites and district-level bureaucrats tend to dominate decision-making spaces, marginalizing farmers and Indigenous groups. This corresponds to Borrás & Franco's (2022) work on the dynamics of land struggles in the Global South. Informants described how agribusiness expansion was legitimized through formal land titles while customary claims remained unrecognized. One village leader noted, "We've cultivated this land for generations, but now they say it belongs to the state." These narratives indicate that formalization does not automatically equate to justice, a point also emphasized by Li (2020) and Hall et al. (2023).

In terms of climate adaptation, only 18% of respondents reported receiving guidance or support for sustainable agricultural practices. Figure 3 illustrates the mismatch between climate risk maps and village development

plans, indicating a lack of spatial data integration. The interviews further revealed that climate narratives have been co-opted by political actors to justify extractive development. For instance, reforestation programs in two villages displaced local grazing areas without consultation. These findings support critiques by IPCC (2023) and Satria & Fauzi (2023) on the depoliticization of ecological policies under the guise of green development.

Figure 3. Mismatch Between Climate Risk Maps and Village Development Plans. This figure illustrates the spatial discrepancy between climate vulnerability zones and the actual focus areas of village development plans. While risk maps highlight areas prone to drought and flooding, most planned infrastructure and agricultural expansions overlap with high-risk zones, indicating weak spatial data integration in rural policy planning.

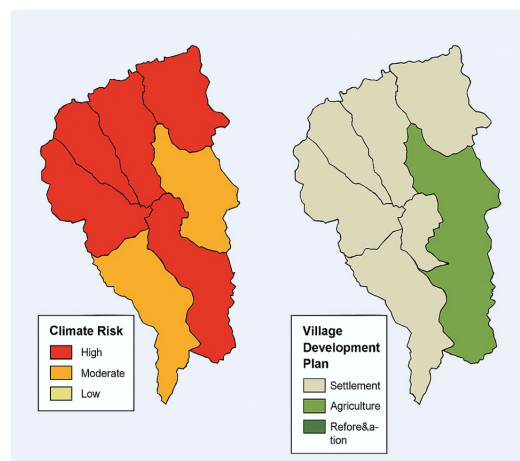


Figure 3. Mismatch Between Climate Risk Maps and Village Development Plans.

The figure illustrates a clear *misalignment* between climate risk maps and village development plans in the coastal areas of East Java. Areas identified as having high climate risk—particularly exposure to tidal flooding, coastal abrasion, and sea-level rise—are still designated for residential settlement and agricultural activities. This pattern indicates that climate vulnerability assessments have not been sufficiently integrated into spatial and development planning processes at the village level.

Consequently, development decisions may increase the exposure of communities and economic assets to long-term climate-related hazards.

This mismatch reflects a broader weakness in incorporating climate adaptation principles into territorial development planning. Rather than prioritizing adaptive land uses such as reforestation or conservation in high-risk zones, development plans remain largely driven by short-term economic considerations. Such an approach risks reinforcing structural vulnerability in coastal villages and undermines the achievement of sustainable development that balances environmental resilience with social and economic objectives.

The inconsistency of village governance is also rooted in fragmented institutional mandates and technical capacity gaps. Informants frequently pointed to conflicting instructions from district agencies and national programs, leading to administrative overload at the village level. As Nilsson et al. (2016) noted,

policy coherence remains a key challenge in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. The study found that 71% of village officials lacked training in environmental impact assessment, leading to poor decision-making. This institutional gap reinforces the need for long-term capacity building as argued by Suwarno et al. (2023).

Land use planning was rarely participatory, despite policy mandates for community involvement. In practice, planning meetings were dominated by external consultants and subdistrict authorities. Table 2 provides a typology of community engagement levels in the planning process across five districts. The data show that meaningful participation occurred in only 2 out of 10 sample villages. These results align with critiques by Pritchett & Woolcock (2018) on the prevalence of isomorphic mimicry in public administration reform. It suggests that the appearance of participation masks deeply unequal power relations in rural governance.

Table 2. Typology of Community Engagement in Land Use Planning Across Five Districts

District	Village	Form of Engagement	Level of Participation	Main Actors Involved	Remarks
District A	Village A1	Public Consultation (Formal Only)	Informative	Consultants, Subdistrict Authorities	Minimal local input; decisions pre-determined
	Village A2	Musrenbangdes (Village Forum)	Tokenistic	Village Officials, Consultants	No follow-up on community suggestions
District B	Village B1	Community Mapping (Pilot)	Interactive	Local Farmers, NGOs	One of two villages with genuine local engagement
	Village B2	Focus Group Discussions	Consultative	Youth Groups, Village Heads	Ideas collected but not reflected in final plan
District C	Village C1	Top-down Planning Meeting	Manipulative	Subdistrict Authorities	Agenda dominated by external road projects
	Village C2	Village Council Forum	Informative	Village Elites, Contractors	Exclusion of women and marginal farmers
District D	Village D1	No Public Meeting Held	None	District Planners	Planning bypassed local level entirely
	Village D2	Open Hearing (documented)	Consultative	Women's Group, School Teachers	Suggestions acknowledged, but no action taken
District E	Village E1	Participatory Rural Appraisal	Interactive	Farmers, Community Facilitators	Genuine dialogue; actions reflected in final plan
	Village E2	Informal Community Talks	Informative	Elders, Village Staff	Unstructured, no documentation or feedback loop

Furthermore, customary land rights remain largely absent in formal policy instruments, even in regions with strong Indigenous institutions. Informants from Tenggerese and Baduy communities expressed concerns about cultural erosion due to homogenized development models. This reinforces the argument by Berkes et al. (2018) on the importance of recognizing social-ecological systems as interdependent. Without this recognition, rural policy runs the risk of imposing inappropriate models that undermine resilience. These findings echo concerns raised by Scoones et al. (2021) about the need for context-specific green transformations.

The results also underscore the contradictions between economic and ecological objectives within village development schemes. For example, palm oil cultivation was promoted as a poverty alleviation strategy, but resulted in declining biodiversity and water quality. Figure 4 visualizes the trade-offs between short-term income gains and long-term ecological degradation. Informants noted that alternative livelihoods such as agroecology or ecotourism received little institutional support. This disconnect suggests a failure to operationalize integrated rural development, a critique previously advanced by UNDP (2022) and Mubyarto et al. (2022).

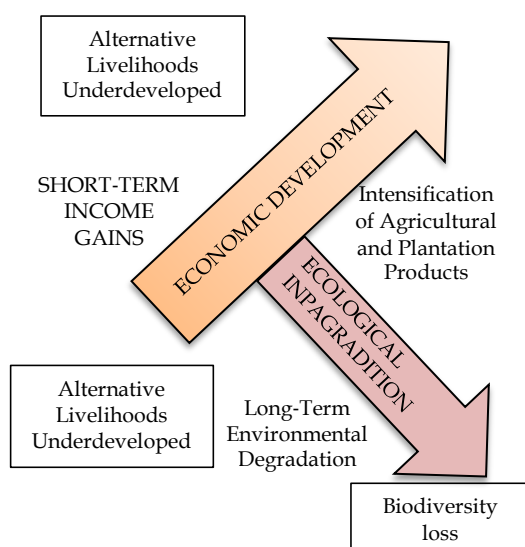


Figure 4. Trade-offs Between Economic Development and Ecological Impact

There is also limited institutional space for innovation at the village level. Informants shared how local experiments with intercropping and organic farming were not recognized in formal programs. This bureaucratic rigidity stifles learning and adaptation, which are critical for navigating complex social-ecological systems. Chandra et al. (2021) argue that rural adaptation must be flexible, iterative, and community-driven. The lack of such mechanisms indicates a misalignment between the structure of state programs and the dynamic nature of rural livelihoods.

Gender dimensions were also underrepresented in rural development planning. Only 14% of planning documents mentioned women's roles in agriculture or land stewardship. Female informants emphasized the invisibility of their labor and decision-making power. This omission perpetuates structural gender biases in policy implementation, as observed in prior studies (Borras & Franco, 2022; Scoones et al., 2021). Effective rural policy must therefore incorporate gender analysis as a central component, rather than as an afterthought.

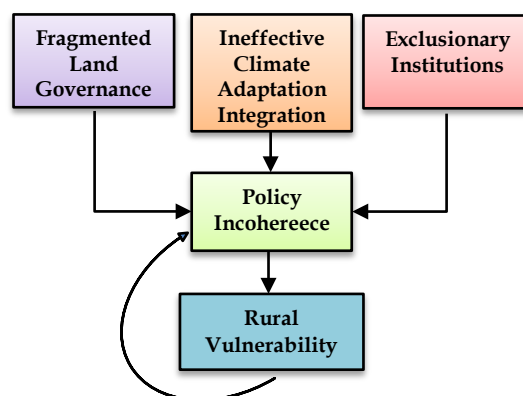


Figure 5. Lack of Data Harmonization

Data integration remains a significant challenge in rural governance. Respondents cited inconsistent data between village information systems (SID), satellite maps, and district reports. This hampers the ability to design adaptive and evidence-based policy. Figure 5 illustrates the lack of harmonization across datasets relevant to land use and climate risk. Nilsson et al. (2016) stress that

integrated policy solutions require shared metrics and interoperable systems. Without this, rural development risks becoming reactive and fragmented.

Despite these challenges, some promising practices were identified. In one district, a multi-stakeholder forum helped align district planning with Indigenous land claims and ecological zoning. This initiative was driven by local CSOs and progressive leadership at the subnational level. The success of this model echoes findings by Scoones et al. (2021) and UNDP (2022) on the importance of polycentric governance. However, scaling such initiatives requires enabling legal frameworks and fiscal support.

In conclusion, the study highlights that policy incoherence in rural development stems not only from technical gaps but also from political and institutional logics. Figure 6 summarizes the drivers of incoherence and their feedback effects on rural vulnerability. These findings affirm the need for a fundamental reorientation of rural development policy toward equity, resilience, and ecological justice. Future reforms must address underlying power asymmetries, strengthen cross-sector coordination, and enhance local agency.

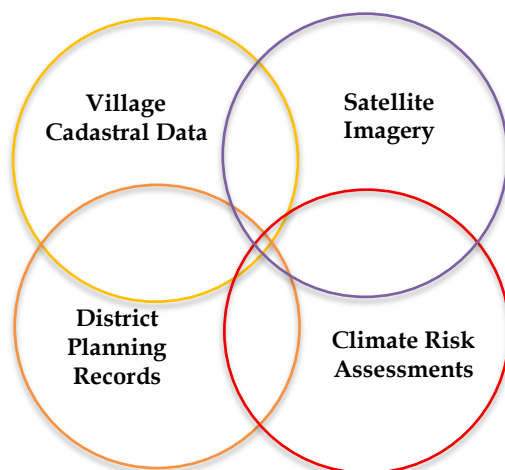


Figure 6. Drivers and Feedback Effects of Policy Incoherence

Figure 6 synthesizes the complex interplay among structural drivers that perpetuate

policy incoherence within rural development frameworks. Fragmented governance structures marked by misaligned policy agendas across sectors combine with the persistent absence of interoperable data systems and limited mechanisms for meaningful community participation. These conditions generate reinforcing feedback loops that exacerbate rural vulnerability. Specifically, top-down policy design, often insulated from grassroots realities, impedes integrative planning and cross-sectoral alignment.

Simultaneously, sectoral compartmentalization entrenches institutional silos that inhibit adaptive governance. External political and economic influences such as elite capture and extractive development logics further distort local development priorities, redirecting resources toward short-term gains at the expense of long-term resilience. The cumulative impact of these factors not only fragments decision-making processes but also undermines ecological sustainability and deepens existing inequalities. This conceptual model reinforces scholarly critiques (UNDP, 2022) that call for a paradigmatic shift toward more integrative, participatory, and justice-oriented rural development policies.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

CONCLUSION

The conclusion This study has examined the institutional and governance dynamics that contribute to policy incoherence in rural development, especially in relation to land use planning and climate risk adaptation. The principal findings indicate that while policy frameworks emphasize participatory and integrated planning, actual practices remain dominated by external actors, fragmented data systems, and sectoral mandates. These factors interact to perpetuate rural vulnerability through feedback loops that reinforce ecological degradation and social exclusion. The disconnect between formal planning instruments and local realities underscores the

persistence of isomorphic mimicry, where appearances of compliance substitute for substantive institutional transformation. Significantly, the study highlights how harmonized data systems, inclusive planning processes, and cross-sectoral coordination are essential for realizing rural development that is both equitable and ecologically resilient.

RECOMMENDATION

A Recommendations derived from these findings stress the need for three strategic shifts. First, national and local governments must invest in interoperable and transparent data platforms to align development goals with climate risk assessments. Second, institutional mechanisms must be redesigned to ensure genuine local participation, not just token consultation, especially in land use decision-making. Third, development strategies must be reoriented to prioritize long-term ecological justice over short-term economic gains. Strengthening local agency and addressing power asymmetries across planning scales are critical to achieving policy coherence and adaptive rural futures. These recommendations not only respond to the empirical gaps identified but also offer a roadmap for actionable reforms in rural governance systems.

IMPLICATIONS

This study implies that policy coherence in rural development can only be achieved through governance reforms that integrate climate risk data, land use planning, and village development frameworks into a unified and binding policy architecture. National and local governments should strengthen interoperable and transparent data systems while reformulating participatory mechanisms to move beyond symbolic consultation toward substantive, locally grounded decision-making. Furthermore, rural development policies must explicitly shift their orientation from short-term economic priorities to long-term ecological justice and resilience by

addressing power asymmetries across sectors and governance scales.

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