

Assistance in the Development of Personal Data Protection (PDP) Policies and Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for Digital Public Services

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Abstract. The rapid digitalization of public services at the village level has significantly increased the volume and sensitivity of personal data managed by local public institutions. Village administrations are required to ensure that personal data processing activities comply with legal, ethical, and security principles to prevent misuse, data breaches, and declining public trust. However, many village governments still lack formal internal policies and standardized procedures to operationalize personal data protection regulations within daily digital service activities. This condition highlights the need for practical and structured interventions that support local officials in translating regulatory requirements into implementable governance instruments. This study aims to examine the effectiveness of a structured assistance-based approach in supporting village officials to develop a Personal Data Protection (PDP) Policy and Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for Digital Public Services. A descriptive qualitative method was employed, with the study conducted at the Mintaragen Village Office, Indonesia. The assistance-based approach was implemented through four stages: initial assessment of digital service workflows and data management practices, capacity building on personal data protection principles, collaborative drafting of PDP policy and SOP documents, and evaluation of assistance outcomes. Data were collected through focused group discussions, semi-structured interviews, and document analysis, and were analyzed using descriptive qualitative techniques. The results show that the assistance-based approach improved village officials' understanding of personal data protection responsibilities and enabled the successful formulation of a PDP Policy and Digital Public Service SOPs that are aligned with legal requirements and local operational needs. The findings indicate that participatory assistance can effectively bridge the gap between regulatory frameworks and practical implementation. This study contributes a replicable assistance-based model for strengthening personal data governance and enhancing the security, accountability, and professionalism of village-level digital public services.

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INTRODUCTION

The rapid digital transformation in public sector services has significantly influenced the governance of administrative processes at the village level. Village governments are increasingly adopting digital systems to improve service efficiency, transparency, and accessibility. At the same time, the volume and sensitivity of personal data managed by local administrations continue to increase, raising concerns related to data security and public trust in digital public services [1], [2].

Village officials play a central role as data controllers and processors in daily administrative activities involving sensitive personal data. In practice, data management at the village level is often carried out based on informal routines and individual discretion rather than standardized internal policies. Previous studies have shown that limited regulatory literacy and the absence of formal governance instruments contribute to vulnerabilities in personal data management within village digital services [3], [4].

The enactment of Law Number 27 of 2022 on Personal Data Protection establishes a clear legal obligation for public institutions, including village governments, to ensure lawful, secure, and accountable personal

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data processing [5]. Although this regulation provides a comprehensive national framework, its implementation at the village level remains uneven. Existing research has largely focused on legal compliance and conceptual governance at higher administrative levels, while limited attention has been given to how village administrations operationalize personal data protection requirements through internal policies and standard operating procedures [6].

Furthermore, prior studies have rarely examined structured assistance as a methodological approach to strengthen the capacity of village officials in formulating Personal Data Protection (PDP) policies and SOPs that are aligned with their operational context. Most research treats personal data protection primarily as a legal or technical issue rather than as a process of organizational capacity building [7].

To address this gap, this study focuses on providing structured assistance to officials at the Mintaragen Village Office in developing a Personal Data Protection (PDP) Policy and Standard Operating Procedures for Digital Public Services. The novelty of this study lies in its emphasis on a collaborative assistance-based approach that integrates regulatory understanding, risk identification, and practical document formulation within the context of village digital services. By positioning assistance as both an educational and organizational intervention, this study contributes empirical evidence on how village-level public institutions can strengthen data governance capacity and achieve regulatory compliance in a practical and sustainable manner.

METHODS

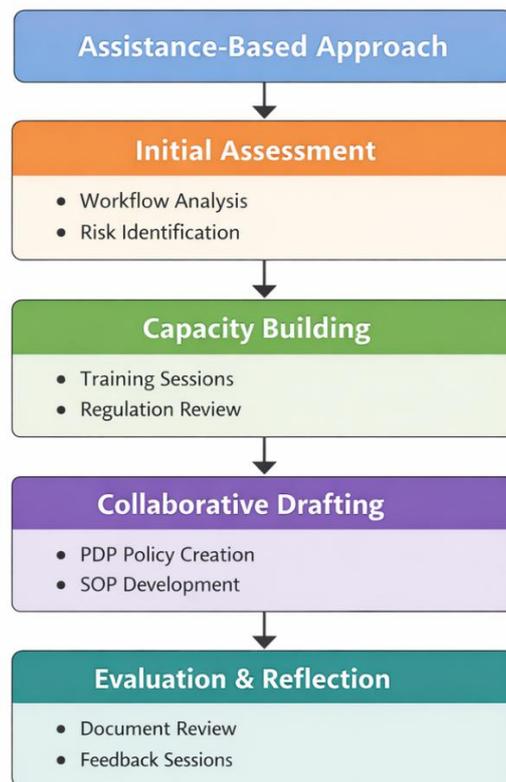


Figure 1. Stages of Assistance-Based Method for PDP Policy and SOP Development

This study was designed to examine how structured assistance can support village-level public institutions in operationalizing personal data protection regulations within digital public services, as illustrated in Figure 1. Rather than focusing on technical system development or quantitative measurement, the research emphasized a process-oriented inquiry aimed at understanding capacity building, institutional readiness, and governance transformation resulting from direct assistance. Accordingly, a qualitative methodological

orientation was adopted to capture contextual dynamics, participant engagement, and practical outcomes generated throughout the assistance process [8].

An assistance-based approach was employed as the core methodological framework of this study. This approach positions assistance not merely as a supporting activity, but as an integral research method that facilitates knowledge transfer, organizational learning, and collaborative policy formulation. Through guided interaction, village officials were actively involved in identifying governance gaps, interpreting regulatory requirements, and translating abstract legal principles into implementable internal policies and standard operating procedures [9]. This participatory orientation was intended to ensure that the resulting governance instruments were both legally compliant and operationally relevant.

To ensure traceability between research procedures and the resulting findings, the methodological design was structured into clearly defined stages. The research process began with an initial assessment of existing digital service workflows and personal data management practices, followed by capacity-building activities, collaborative policy drafting, and outcome evaluation. Data were collected and analyzed across these stages to capture changes in understanding, behavior, and institutional capability among village officials [10]. The following subsections describe each stage of the assistance-based method and the corresponding data collection and analysis procedures applied in this study.

A. Initial Assessment Stage

The initial assessment stage aimed to identify existing digital service workflows, personal data processing practices, and governance gaps prior to the assistance intervention. This stage involved focused discussions and preliminary interviews with village officials, as well as a review of existing service documents and administrative procedures. The assessment focused on mapping institutional readiness, identifying informal practices, and recognizing potential risks in personal data handling, which served as the baseline for subsequent assistance activities [11].

B. Capacity Building Stage

The capacity building stage was designed to enhance village officials' understanding of personal data protection principles, roles, and legal responsibilities. Structured discussions and guided explanations were conducted to introduce key concepts of personal data protection, including lawful processing, accountability, and data security. This stage emphasized practical relevance by linking regulatory requirements to officials' daily administrative activities, in line with previous findings on the importance of regulatory literacy in local governance [12].

C. Collaborative Drafting Stage

The collaborative drafting stage focused on the joint formulation of governance instruments, namely a Personal Data Protection (PDP) Policy and Standard Operating Procedures for Digital Public Services. Village officials actively participated in defining roles, responsibilities, data processing procedures, and incident handling mechanisms. Researchers acted as facilitators to ensure alignment with regulatory requirements while maintaining suitability to local operational contexts. The resulting documents served as tangible outputs of the assistance-based approach [9].

D. Evaluation and Data Analysis Stage

The evaluation stage assessed the outcomes of the assistance-based approach through reflective discussions and document review. This stage examined improvements in officials' understanding, consistency of data handling practices, and the completeness of the PDP Policy and SOPs. Data analysis followed a descriptive qualitative approach involving data reduction, categorization, and interpretation to identify patterns related to governance strengthening and institutional capacity development [10].

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This section presents and discusses the results of the study based on the assistance-based methodological stages described in the Methods section. The presentation of results is organized in accordance with the sequence of the assistance process, namely initial assessment, capacity building, collaborative drafting, and evaluation. This structure ensures consistency between the research procedures and the findings obtained from each stage of the assistance-based approach.

A. Results of Initial Assessment Stage

The initial assessment stage aimed to identify existing digital service workflows, data processing practices, and governance gaps related to personal data management at the Mintaragen Village Office. The assessment revealed that digital public services were already being utilized for various administrative functions, including population data management, correspondence, and service documentation. However, these activities were not supported by formal internal policies or standardized procedures governing personal data processing.

Village officials generally managed personal data based on habitual practices and individual experience rather than written guidelines. The assessment also indicated limited awareness of personal data protection principles, particularly regarding data access control, risk identification, and incident handling. These findings confirm the need for structured governance instruments and align with the objectives of the assistance-based approach, which focuses on addressing institutional readiness and regulatory literacy gaps.

From a governance perspective, the results of this stage highlight that digitalization at the village level tends to precede the establishment of adequate data protection mechanisms. This condition reinforces the argument that regulatory implementation requires not only legal frameworks but also targeted assistance to translate regulations into operational practices.

B. Results of Capacity Building Activities

The capacity building stage focused on enhancing village officials' understanding of personal data protection principles and legal obligations through structured discussions and guided explanations. Following these activities, officials demonstrated improved comprehension of their roles as data controllers and processors, as well as greater awareness of data security, accountability, and lawful processing requirements.

Discussions during this stage revealed a shift in officials' perspectives, particularly in recognizing personal data protection as an integral component of public service quality rather than merely a legal obligation. Officials were able to identify potential risks within their existing workflows and articulate the importance of preventive measures, such as access limitation and proper documentation.

These results indicate that capacity building plays a critical role in bridging the gap between regulatory provisions and daily administrative practices. The findings support previous studies emphasizing that human capacity and regulatory literacy are key determinants of effective data governance in public institutions.

C. Results of Collaborative Drafting Process

The collaborative drafting stage resulted in the development of two main governance instruments: a Personal Data Protection (PDP) Policy and Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for Digital Public Services. The drafting process actively involved village officials, enabling them to define roles, responsibilities, data processing stages, and incident response mechanisms in a manner aligned with their operational context.

The resulting documents reflect practical considerations derived from daily service activities, including data collection, storage, access, and deletion procedures. Officials were able to translate abstract regulatory principles into concrete operational rules, indicating a successful transfer of knowledge from the assistance process to tangible governance outputs.

From an organizational perspective, this stage demonstrates that participatory assistance is effective in fostering ownership and ensuring that policy documents are not merely symbolic, but applicable and sustainable. The presence of formally documented policies and SOPs represents a significant improvement in institutional data governance readiness at the village level.

D. Evaluation of Assistance Outcomes

The evaluation stage assessed both process-related and outcome-related aspects of the assistance-based approach. Reflective discussions and document reviews showed that village officials experienced increased confidence in managing personal data and greater clarity regarding standard procedures for digital public

services. The quality and completeness of the PDP Policy and SOPs indicate alignment with personal data protection principles and regulatory requirements.

Evaluation results also suggest that the assistance-based approach contributed to changes in organizational behavior, particularly in terms of increased caution when handling sensitive data and improved consistency in service delivery. These findings demonstrate that assistance not only produces formal documents but also facilitates behavioral and cultural change within public institutions.

Overall, the evaluation confirms on Table 1 that the structured assistance-based method is effective in strengthening personal data governance at the village level. By linking regulatory understanding with collaborative policy formulation, the approach provides a practical model for other village administrations seeking to improve the security, accountability, and professionalism of their digital public services.

Table 1. Changes in Data Governance Conditions

Aspect	Before Assistance	After Assistance
Data governance policy	Not available	PDP Policy established
SOP for digital services	Not standardized	Formal SOP implemented
Officials understanding	Limited	Improved
Data handling practice	Informal	Structured & documented

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that a structured assistance-based approach is effective in strengthening personal data governance within village-level digital public services. Through participatory stages involving assessment, capacity building, collaborative policy drafting, and evaluation, village officials were able to translate regulatory requirements on personal data protection into practical and implementable governance instruments. The establishment of a Personal Data Protection (PDP) Policy and Standard Operating Procedures for Digital Public Services not only improved institutional readiness and consistency in data handling, but also fostered greater awareness and accountability among officials in managing citizens' personal data. The findings indicate that assistance-oriented interventions can bridge the gap between legal frameworks and operational practices, particularly in local public institutions with limited regulatory literacy. As an implication, this approach offers a replicable model for other village administrations seeking to enhance the security, professionalism, and public trust of their digital services, while also highlighting the importance of continuous capacity development to ensure sustainable compliance with personal data protection regulations.

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