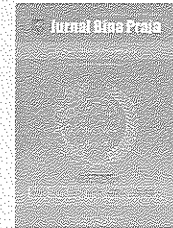


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## MULTIDIRECTIONAL NETWORKS OF GOVERNMENT TRANSPARENCY: A PRELIMINARY MODEL

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### Abstract

This article reviews some literature in theoretical level regarding two concepts: governance network and government transparency, in order to search for theoretical linkages and to build an alternative framework that can support the implementation of public disclosure. Transparency agenda has been implemented in various forms at international, national, and local level. Transparency application was also followed by Indonesia with the implementation of Public Information Disclosure Law since 2008. This enthusiasm is quite reasonable because transparency is believed to be one of the human rights principles; as well as a key to better governance, that can help democracy consolidation, prevent corruption, strengthen the legitimacy and improve efficiency. In order to maximize transparency, the government can use a network approach because of some changes at this time, such as democratization, decentralization, and liberalization has placed the government in a position where there is not one actor who manages the state power without stakeholder's participation. In this context, the government needs to build synergies with other institutions in a reciprocal relationship with all stakeholders. Therefore, adopting the theory of government networks can be one of the strategies to strengthen government transparency. The findings of this article indicate that the government transparency application needs to develop networks in all directions: intragovernmental, intergovernmental and collaborative networks. These three types of network in contrast with the popular belief that government transparency is interpreted only as a procedural activity to outside parties. A preliminary model in this article gives an overview about the arena of government transparency with multi-directional networks more comprehensively.

**Keywords:** governance network, network approach, government transparency.

### I. INTRODUCTION

Transparency is becoming an important agenda in almost all countries in the world along with the promotion of good governance. Global trends transparency agenda has manifested in various forms, such as at the international level, national and local. At the international level, there has been ongoing Open Government Partnership (OGP) as a multilateral program, which until now consisted of 60 countries (OGP, 2014: 3). At the national level, there appear some differences on the part of the transparency implementation from one country to another. For example, the United States emphasizes more on the enactment of the Freedom of Information Act that maximizes information

technology, known as open records and sunshine laws (Hudson, 2005: 11). Meanwhile, Brazil applies transparency by launching 'Brazil Transparent' programs consisting of transparency activities as an implementation of public information rules. One of the 'Brazil Open Budgets' programs launched the online state spending. Meanwhile, the Philippines apply the initiation of fiscal transparency in the extractive industry (OGP, 2014: 12). While in China, transparency practice is the consequence of domestic reforms that initially took place in the village, and then spread to urban areas and applied to the village administration and to Democratic Management Disclosure regulations (Wenjing, 2011: 985). Transparency application was also

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followed by Indonesia since the enactment of Public Information Openness Law No 14 of 2008.

This enthusiasm is quite reasonable, considering from the standpoint of conceptual-theoretical, transparency is believed to be one of the human rights as well the key principle to improve the quality of governance or as a key to better governance which helped democracy consolidation, prevent corruption, strengthen the legitimacy and improve efficiency (Florini 2002; Birkinshaw, 2006; Hood, 2006; Lennon and Berg-Cross, 2010). Transparency requires the disclosure in the administration, where the government as a state organ must open access to information as possible for the public to avoid opacity and secrecy. Government transparency presents a situation in which individuals and communities have the right to access and obtain public information about the documentation of the activities or events which have been carried out by the Public Agency. Thus, the present government information should be open to public and easy to access.

The lofty goal was not necessarily to be realized because transparency is still not performing well. It can be traced from how the idealization of transparency concept and how the reality. Ideally, transparency able to realize a few things, namely: 1) the responsibility of officials and officers to be more effective; 2) strengthening checks and balances; 3) reduced corruption; and 4) public services more efficient (Kristiansen, 2006). But in reality, the current administration would indicate the contrary. Some research suggests that officials and authorities have not been fully able to "open", both institutional (Sjoraida, 2014: 235) and behaviorally (Kasman, 2013: 200). Checks and balances function that is expected to strengthen transparency is still weak due to the uneven legal instrument which allows the checks and balances between the government and parties outside, as demonstrated by many NGO's advocacy activities in local level (Rinaldi *et al.*, 2007: 6). The gap is more visible in terms of corruption and even more extended to the regional level as envisaged in the Indonesian Corruption Perceptions Index that showing the high indications of corrupt behavior (TII, 2014: 3) and the fact of local government corruption cases until January 2014 reached 318 cases (Republika, 2/14/2014). Similarly, public service integrity is still yet fully discloses information in public service activities (KPK, 2014: 24).

The gap between transparency in theoretical and empirical as outlined above would require an approach that can bring the idealization of transparency closer to the practice. An academic approach that can be applied to the transparency application as the main foundation of governance namely the governance network approach that is

yet widely carried out by academics.

At least there are some perspectives in the governance study, including: (1) rational choice (Simon, 1985; Jones, 2001); (2) institutionalism in some theory: integration stability (March and Olsen, 1995), delegation structure (Bertelli, 2006), cultural institutions (Hood, 2000; Thompson *et al.*, 1990; Wildavsky, 1987), coordination among autonomous actors (Kooiman, 1993; Mayntz, 1993); and (3) interpretive (Foucault, 1991; Bevir and Rhodes, 2006). In addition, there is a relatively new perspective namely governance network used in this paper.

The main argument of governance network approach is good governance will be achieved if supported by the network (Rhodes, 1997: xii). This perspective defines governance is about managing networks. The process of governmental operationalization is seen as a network of actors and organizational with the complexity of interrelation among different actors, but there is interdependence and resources exchange (Rhodes, 1997; Klijn, 1997). The assumption based on this perspective is that the quality of government transparency will increase if the network supports constructive governance. Likewise, the government transparency will be difficult to materialize if the network is still bad governance.

This assumption is not without evidence. As happened in St. Johns County, Florida, the local government succeeded in implementing government transparency because it was supported by a collaborative network (Berghlund, 2013: 1). This one of US local governments was awarded the Sunny Award from Sunshine Review for successfully facilitating the active involvement of citizens, taxpayers, and the government through its official website. The information provided could always be updated, complete, fast, and actual because there is good cooperation between the government and non-government institutions, especially in terms of communication and supply data. Unlike the case with the results of a study conducted by Guha and Chakrabarti (2014: 335) on the public information network through e-government in India, where it is known that the program Gyandoot, Bhoomi, and Akshaya have weaknesses in building a network, especially relationships with non-government actors.

Two examples of government transparency application above showed the networking aspect to be very decisive in supporting the successful transparency implementation. Hypothetically, the network needs to be built and strengthened in the implementation of government transparency that involves various stakeholders to provide information through cooperation with non-governmental institutions. Based on this argument, the further

question is: what type of model can be applied to make its implementation more comprehensive? Therefore, this paper aims to build a preliminary model of government transparency that use the network approach in its application, in order to become more extensive and comprehensively.

## II. METHOD

This paper could be classified as a theoretical expression study that uses the model-building method. According to Jaccard and Jacoby (2010: 29), model-building skills can be interpreted as a part of a theoretical expression. In various definition, a model is a special type of theory; portions of theories; derived from theories; or simplified versions of theories. This study built a preliminary model derived from some theories; government transparency and governance network; to draws the networking model of government transparency.

A model consists of elements and relationships, including selected elements, characteristics or events, and links them to each other. Many elements may be listed and linked or only the essential components may be included, depending on the study purpose. To identify the elements, by defending their relevance and postulating the nature of their relationships, the author incorporates the ideas, the observations of others and the research literature (O'Sullivan and Rassel, 1995: 10).

In this paper, the model should be considered as a preliminary study and as a simplification of reality. The schematic model uses pictures, lines, points, to designate the elements and illustrate their relationship to each other. This model-building study will develop a discipline's body of knowledge and set the stage for further empirical research.

## III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### A. Conceptual Framework

#### 1) Government Transparency

Transparency is a concept that emphasizes openness in state administration. According to this concept, government as organs of state should open up the widest access to public information so they can know what is happening during the governing process. Transparency emphasizes that the general public (civil society) must be known or have access to all information regarding measures taken by policymakers (Kumorotomo, 2008: 2).

Some scholars already interpret transparency from various perspectives. Kurniadi *et al.* (2009: 37) for example, defines transparency as a condition that can be 'seen' or 'detected'. If related to governance, it can be defined as a situation where stakeholders can 'see' and 'detect' what is the government activity. Other scientists, Birkinshaw (2006: 47)

said transparency is the implementation of public affairs in terms of openness so that it can be public scrutiny. Hood (2006: 211) has a more traditional view that the transparency of governance refers to the rules on the publication of basic information and procedures that can be accessed by the public which clarifies the activities that have been done by the government.

One of transparency experts, Florini (2002: 26) defines transparency as the degree of availability of information to outsiders which make them able to know the decision-making process and to assess the decisions made. In her views, transparency encourages a new kind of "devolution" not from central to local government, but from the government to civil society. In other words, government transparency could be interpreted as the ability to monitor which involves the ability of individuals and groups outside the government organizations to know government activities and how the decision-making process. This paper is in line with the definition proposed by Grimmelikhuijsen (2010: 10) that government transparency is the availability of information about an organization or actor which allows external actors to monitor the internal workings and performance of government organizations.

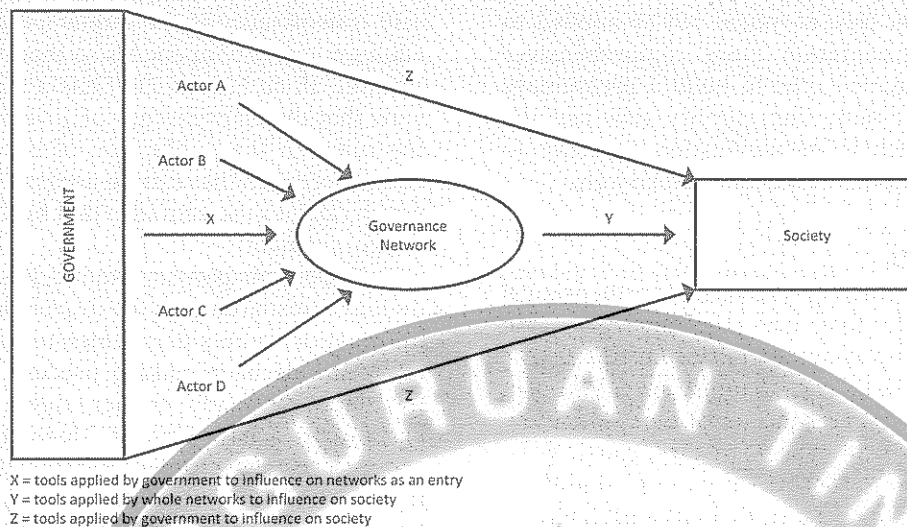
One question that often arises related to the concept of transparency is whether the difference between transparency and openness. Birkinshaw (2010: 29) considers that openness and transparency have close understandings, which both convey something broader that leads to government information. Openness means focusing on the process that allows us to look at the operational activities undertaken by the government in carrying out its duties. This paper examines the transparency as stated by Heald (2006: 29) that transparency not only openness but also covers aspects of simplicity, completeness, and recency of information.

When government more transparent, more people will have a sufficient understanding of the operation in and challenges faced by government, including obstacles to transparency. Transparency can be defined as a form of accountability because it can educate citizens and the private sector in order to provide solutions for problems of governance. The solution provided will lead to increased transparency resulting empowerment have been going non-government parties. No wonder then, as Koelkebeck (2010: 293) said, there is no clear boundary between government and the governed as it began to run away with the openness that accompanied the mutual communication so it is difficult to determine who is in and who is out.

#### 2) Governance Network

Network concept has now begun to be applied





**Figure 1.** Governance Network as Governmental Tools  
 Source: Vabo and Roseland (2012: 937)

in a variety of social and political studies such as sociology, public administration, government science, political science or other sciences. This paper will understand the concept of the network from government science, especially governance network theory.

There are various views on the network (Marsh and Smith, 2000: 4), but this paper sees the network as a complexity of linkages between actors involved in the transparency of government. Adopting the definition of O'Toole (1997: 45) in accordance with the concept of modern governance, the network is "the structures of interdependence involving multiple organizations or parts thereof, where one unit is not merely the formal subordinate of the others in some larger hierarchical arrangement".

In that context, Rhodes (1997: 15) says governance is "to self-organizing, inter-organizational networks characterized by interdependence, resource exchange, rules of the game and significant autonomy from the state". More specifically Rhodes (2007: 1246) wrote governance network has characteristics among others:

1. Interdependence between organizations. Governance is broader than government, covering non-state actors. Changing the boundaries of the state meant the boundaries between public, private and voluntary sectors became shifting and opaque.
2. Continuing interactions between network members, caused by the need to exchange resources and negotiate shared purposes.
3. Game-like interactions; rooted in trust and regulated by rules of the game negotiated and agreed by network participants.
4. A significant degree of autonomy from the state. Networks are not accountable to the state; they are self-organizing. Although the state does not

occupy a privileged, sovereign position, it can indirectly and imperfectly steer networks.

Those characteristics may become the source of inspiration for the government to utilize the governance network as a means to gain better achievement because if done by its own will be difficult with some limitations such as lack of human and financial resources. The use of governance network in the context of an equal relationship has caused a paradigm shift in the hierarchy into the network. As said Kickert *et al.* (1997: 9) found a strong idea in network governance is an institution capable of developing partnerships with actors who have the same interest and synergize in relation to the better achievement. Governance networks can be regarded as a form of coordination between equivalent actors in which each actor bind themselves to others based on their independent choice. From what has stated above, shows a logic contained therein, the failure to manage the network will lead to the failure of governance.

The network can also be seen as a tool used by the government in carrying out the functions and roles of the community (tools of government). In the context of the relationship between the rulers (government) and the ruled (society), network occupies the intermediary role between many actors. Aspects of participation, public space and accountability into several aspects contained in it, as seen in Figure 1.

The figure shows the position of governmental tools in a network setting. When rules in a hierarchy, government influence society by using tools such as regulations, budgets, etc. (z). In addition, a government may use various intermediaries between public and community, such as branches of local government, companies, and civil society organizations (CSO). In this context, a network



why transparency is often ambivalent in practice.

From the description of the variation of transparency above, it is known that the form of government transparency can be run as a process of public disclosure of government to parties outside of government, vertically or horizontally, for all activities, documents and information that are not classified as a state secret by emphasizing accessibility and high accuracy. Ideally, government transparency must be done more substantive and achieve full transparency degrees.

In the transparency implementation, the government should give priority to network approach because in the present time some changes such as democratization, decentralization, and economic liberalization have put the government's position is not the only actor who manages the state power and not the only party who can resolve public issues without participation other stakeholders. In this context, the government needs to build synergy in the relationship more equal because each actor has autonomy. Therefore, the governance network became one of the strategies that need to be promoted.

The government acting as the sole actor in the implementation of transparency is not the right idea

because a single actor has only limited resources to carry out roles optimally there must hold interaction of several actors within the framework of interdependence and resource exchange. Synergies with stakeholders need to be built with the ability to network management in order to build mutual energy (collective energy) to achieve a common goal (collective gain) as the elaboration of public interest. Failure to manage the network will lead to the failure of governance.

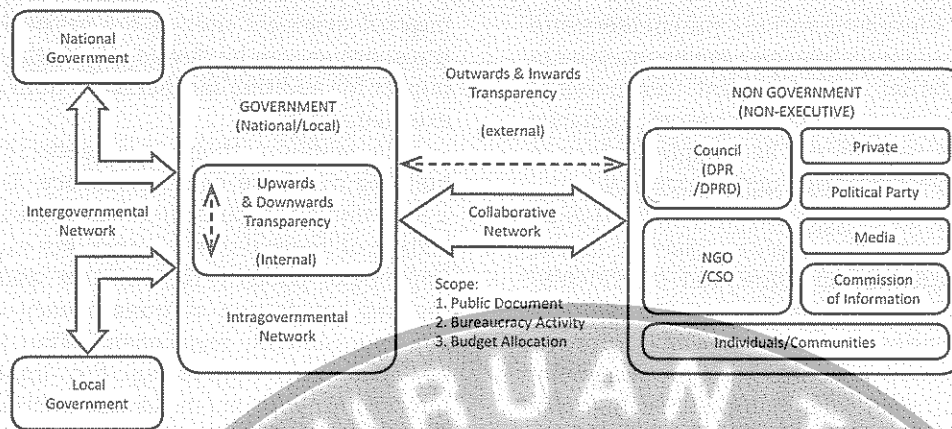
Stakeholders include the public organizations (both local and national); governments at various levels; media; corporates; financial institutions; cultural and religious groups; citizen action groups; and various nongovernment organizations. All stakeholders feel they have a legitimate claim to know vast quantities of information about a government's actions and intents. Stakeholders are at the center of the demand for information as a new level of transparency.

Application of transparency between the government and the governed, involves many parties, both internal government and some non-government parties such as private sector, community organizations, NGOs, media, and individual in society. Actors involved are not single

**Table 1.**  
Roles of Actors in Government Transparency

Actors	Role
National Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Running the leadership function to provide direction for good governance in general, especially in fighting corruption and promoting government transparency agenda.</li> <li>Responsible for leading the implementation of transparency reforms, improve and institutionalize successful initiatives of the local government.</li> <li>Strategies that can be done: passed law, raising public awareness and support the integrity of the campaign.</li> </ul>
Head of Local Government/Local Decision Maker	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Developing criteria for transparency, together with other stakeholders</li> <li>Developing incentives-disincentives for those who succeeded/failed to meet the criteria of transparency</li> <li>Open space and access to transparency process</li> </ul>
Councils	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Escorting transparency process includes applying transparency in the legislature.</li> <li>Activating the role of crawler people aspirations to increase participation.</li> </ul>
Bureaucracy/Policy Implementer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Follows rule of game has been made by the leader</li> <li>Providing information access and accuracy that required by leaders and society</li> </ul>
Private Sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain productivity not hampered because of administrative procedures uncertainty</li> <li>Avoiding the lack of accountability for instance by refusing to give bribe</li> <li>Encouraging governments to provide mechanisms and transparent rules</li> </ul>
NGO/CSO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community advocacy if there is a mechanism of public services is not transparent and harmful to society</li> <li>Being an intermediary between the interests of society and government</li> </ul>
Media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify and expose findings caused by processes that are not transparent.</li> <li>Support and build momentum for change by disseminating information about good practices and the government's success in achieving development program.</li> </ul>
Individual and Communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strengthen the commitment to support the transparent government.</li> <li>Actively participate in policy-making processes that affect their lives.</li> <li>Maintain and enhance personal integrity were clean and transparent.</li> </ul>

Source: Kurniadi, et.al (2009: 47-48)



**Figure 3.** Multidirectional Networking Model of Government Transparency  
 Source: elaborated by the author, based on Heald (2006); Vabo and Roiseland (2012).

because transparency is the need for all parties, from central government, local governments and society. Here are some of the actors and their role in achieving transparency:

Good relations between government and other stakeholders need to develop on aspects of institutional relations. Non-governmental organizations who are always involved in various government activities will be awakened common vision, values, and perceptions in seeing the application of transparency. This similarity will be able to build cooperation and synergies and better quality.

The government needs to implement the networks synergies with various parties to supporting transparency implementation. A government with all its limitations must be able to embrace all those who have competence in improving transparency performance. This relationship is not rigid and static but dynamic, more could be strengthened, slackened could even form a new relationship. Efforts to maintain network relationships while maximizing its contribution to the government transparency must continue to be the main purpose of government organization.

In the context of governance, transparency scope consists of: (1) public documents, such as the budget, Local Regulation, Local Head Regulation, Local Head Decision, data and other documents which not include in the category of state secrets; (2) the activities of bureaucracy, particularly with regard to the policy-making process, from agenda setting, problem formulation, policy determination, to the implementation and evaluation stages. It also involves activities and procedures of public services; (3) activities related bureaucratic budget, in the budget, there is a mechanism in which the reciprocal rights and obligations between government and citizens. Budget is also a 'binocular' to see what government within a certain time (Kurniadi *et al.*, 2009: 45).

Heald's opinion on transparency can be combined with governance network perspective to clarify the view that government transparency is not only about the openness to outside parties as such, but are multidirectional. Conceptually, the governance network perspective in line with multi-directional transparency perspective, so both perspectives can be mutually reinforcing and complementary. Transparency will be optimized if supported by networks while involving all stakeholders that can be realized in a variety of activities, either directly openness (applicant information) or indirectly (through the media). The combination can be drawn into a model scheme (Figure 3).

Description of government transparency above shows that application of government transparency is not only about the openness to outsiders, but also includes internal and external transparency. One government entity seen from the network chain can be categorized into three types: 1) external network to the non-executive (collaborative network); 2) networks between government agencies (intragovernmental network); and 3) networks between various governmental levels.

The collaborative network committed in an attempt to run out the outwards transparency and inwards transparency with the scope of the disclosure including public documents, bureaucracy activity, and budget allocation. Chain network with external parties is very important to be developed as a part of good governance implementation where transparency is inseparable with the various activities as a form of participation and accountability.

The collaborative network provides an opportunity for engagement of multi-actors with their complexities in interactions and perspectives, to participate in the decision-making process or policy implementation which formal, consensus-oriented and deliberative (Ansell & Gash: 2008: 546). This



type of network involving various stakeholders into a joint forum and public agencies can be involved in the implementation of government transparency. These circumstances created resource exchange between actors who should be complementary in order to ensure optimization of transparency.

External parties consist of councils (DPR/DPRD), the private sector, political parties, media, NGOs, Information Commission, and individuals/communities. Thus transparency is not the work of government alone but should be seen as a reciprocal process between all stakeholders. The government could perform the role of initiator and facilitator in the early stages of network formation to then steer the network becomes more equal, interdependent with each other and ongoing resource exchange. These conditions are prerequisites of the ideal collaborative network.

The government could initiate the formation of the government transparency forum, both at the central and regional level, with the involvement of non-state actors who voluntarily engage as public representation. This forum is to prepare the transparency agenda from planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation in deliberative ways. In this forum also held resource exchange mechanism to carry out transparency agenda that has been specified together.

Various attempts on transparency application should not be separated from the role of other stakeholders, such as online transparency via an official website which would require a technology provider with high quality on information facilities and technical, accompanied by some operators which allow the available data can always be complete, current, up to date and accurate.

Internal government transparency is also important to be done through upward transparency and downward transparency via what I call as an intragovernmental network. To create and maximize internal transparency of government need to develop an intragovernmental network between organizational units on each governmental entity. As in Indonesia, the government has been obliged to establish the Management Officer of Documentation and Information (PPID) in systems and institutions, so this internal network on PPID should be addressed as part of improving the quality of public information service delivery. Some missions can be assisted through the network, namely: strengthening the intranet system, expediting flows of information, improving operator skill, SOP development and provision of service infrastructure.

In one work unit must also take place transparency upward and downward which is supported by the monitoring system of a higher working unit with monitoring by the

internal oversight unit. If the network of internal transparency can be developed, it will be a positive impact for auditing mechanisms, both internal and external audits.

In addition, there is a leadership factor in building a culture of transparency. The leader of a government organization has a task to create a culture of internal transparency. For example, could implement policies that ensure and encourage the implementation of transparency with reward and punishment mechanism. The leader must be constantly monitoring the implementation, intervening with an important decision to adjust the facts accordance with the existing rules, and minimize conflicts of interest. Top leader's commitment is a key factor to guarantee the sustainability of transparency and applying the principles of exemplary.

Openness among fellow government units and between parts inside became the basis for strengthening government transparency into the process of habituation and growing commitments for government officials. For this kind of transparency, organizational strategies, like coordination, performance, monitoring, and evaluation, will be more effective to implement than negotiation strategies.

In applying transparency agenda, a government entity also has a formal relationship with other government entities, such as central government and local governments. This interrelation interpreted as an intergovernmental network. These networks also carry out the outwards transparency and inwards transparency same as with collaborative network.

This network is almost always present in every implementation of government policies or programs, especially programs that are mandated policies from higher levels of government. Attributed to transparency, this type of network can support the regulatory aspects, facilitation, education, finance and personnel with specific skills. The higher government should run the advisory role as well as the watchdog over the implementation of transparency.

#### IV. CONCLUSION

Network approach can support the implementation of government transparency due to government transparency is not carried out by government alone, but related to various stakeholders. Government transparency is not only a procedure of information disclosure to outsiders, but multi-directional activities, namely transparency outward, inward, upward and downward. Various directions of external transparency will run better if supported by the network involved with non-executive stakeholders (collaborative network); network among government fellow



units (intragovernmental network); and network between government entities (intergovernmental network). Internal government transparency is also important to be developed through regulation and internalization, in order to encourage the transparency institutionalization that it aligns with bureaucratic reform agenda.

As a preliminary model, this paper requires further study on any type of government transparency networks that already identified by the author. Studies from various perspectives are greatly welcomed in order to develop the model so it can be useful for empirical policy.

Practical reflection from a preliminary model of multi-directional networks of government transparency leads to several recommendations, among others:

1. External government transparency to the public, need to take advantage of a collaborative network with some parties outside the government. A network will help capacity building and needs in order to optimize transparency through resource exchange and interdependence with trusting each other. This step is also capable of eroding public distrust to the government agency which is seen closed and corrupt. The network could be initiated by the government in various forms of cooperation programs both formal and informal, for example by maximizing the internet and social media to give and receive information between the various parties, as well as involving the Information Commission as an intermediary.
2. In addition to external transparency, the government needs to strengthen its internal transparency are among the organizational unit by optimizing the coordination and supervision of the internal system of government as an intragovernmental network. Openness between internal units can be intensive communication and coordination between PPID accompanied institutional strengthening regulatory capacity, because based on formal legal and duties, these institutions organize interrelationships between units of government on transparency service.
3. The government entities should be aware that in carrying out the relations and transparency also require the support of other government entities (central and local) such as to supply the needs of data, exchange of information, infrastructure support, human resources, and funding. In other words, the process of this intergovernmental network to support the quality and quantity of public information service that can be more complete, accurate, fast, and easy to access.

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