

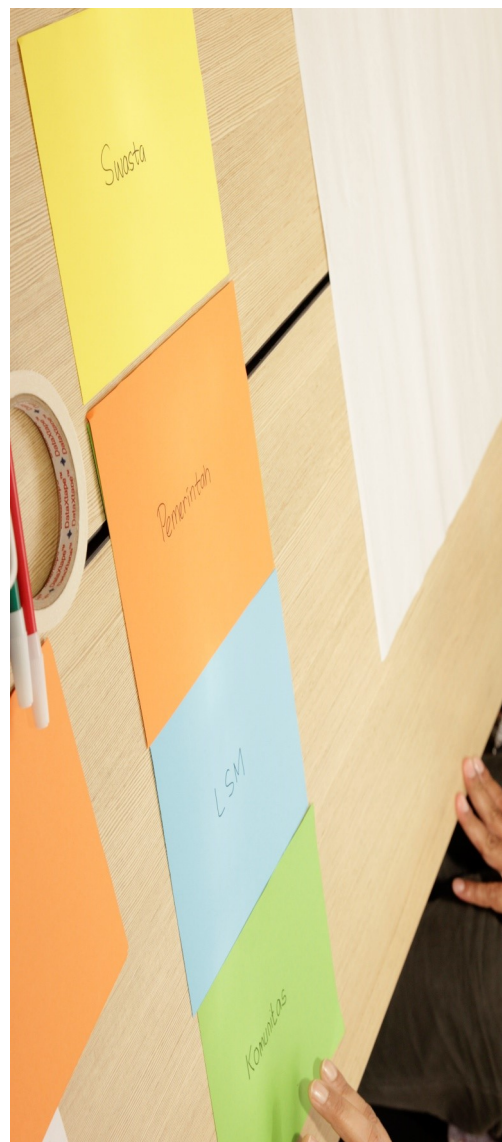
# Institutions of Organic Farming in Java

Organic farming in Java has been emerging in recent years. More and more farmers have started to implement organic agricultural methods to grow various commodities, for instance food crops, vegetables, and cash crops. At the same time, this trend has drawn the attentions of different stakeholders with a diversity of goals, roles, and motivations. To investigate the stakeholders who shape the institutional landscape of organic farming in Indonesia, an 'institution and organization' session was conducted at the first IndORGANIC Workshop, December 2017 in Yogyakarta.

To collect the participants' insights regarding this issue, we organized two groups of Net-Map exercises as a participatory method. The main guiding question was: Who are the influential stakeholders in organic farming, especially in Java?

The focus on Java was motivated by the composition of the participants who are primarily active as consultants, farmers, government officials, academia, traders, and activists in West and Central Java.

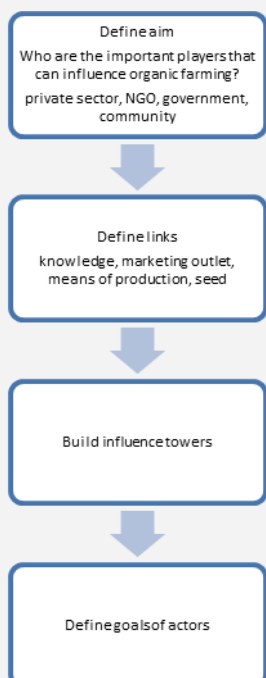
Based on the discussions during the Net-Map activity, this policy brief presents the current dynamics among various stakeholders, the importance of non-governmental stakeholders, and contested issue on the roles and influences of government.



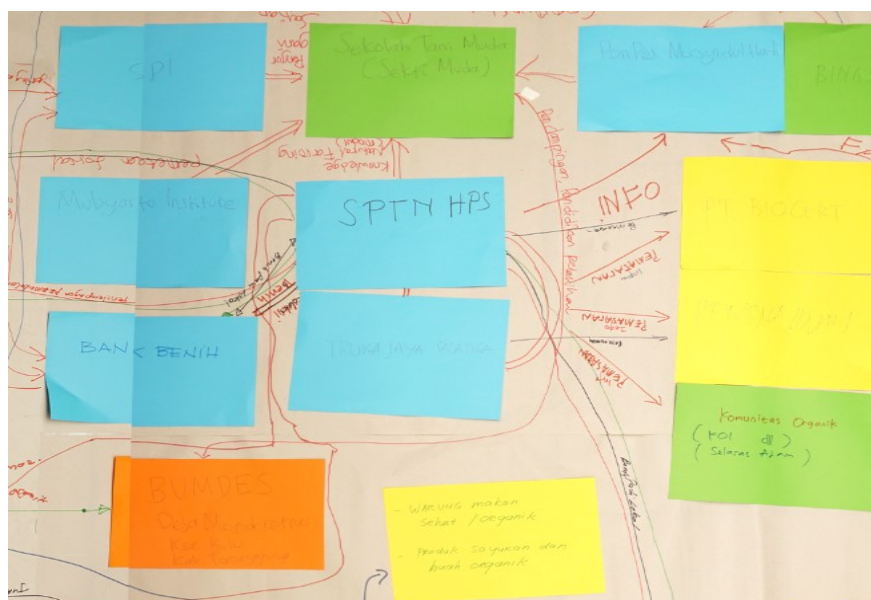
## TOPICS

- Institutional landscape
- Influential stakeholders
- Government's roles

It is a participatory interview-based mapping tool that facilitates people to understand, visualize, discuss, and improve conditions where different actors can influence outcomes. The advantages of this method are: its suitability for intercultural settings, it facilitates learning process and active engagement of participants, and its potential use for participants in strategizing future cooperation with other stakeholders. The procedure is:



The Net-Map exercise illustrated the strong interconnection across stakeholders in the exchange of knowledge, agricultural inputs, and marketing channels. There is an exchange of information on agricultural programs and knowledge between organic farmers and ministry of agriculture, tourism, cooperative, and village government. In addition, private sectors, for instance exporter of organic products and producer of agricultural inputs, function as marketing channels and input suppliers for farmers. A number of NGOs, such as Farmer and Fisherman Association World Food Day (SPTNHPS), Bina Sarana Bakti (BSB), and Young Farmer School, are crucial in facilitating transfer of organic farming techniques and knowledge with other NGOs, farmers or farmer groups, and government bodies. The high influence of SPTNHPS is further demonstrated by the high degree of centrality and betweenness according to Social Network Analysis (SNA).



**Figure 1.** Net-Map detail showing the centrality of the actor SPTNHPS

One common theme between the 2 groups was the importance of consumers. As one organic farmer stated, "If I do not have customers, then I cannot sell my organic products". Participants debated over the roles of academic institutions both as direct consumers or providers for marketing channels of organic products. Government officials are often considered as important organic consumers, either through their interpersonal relationships with organic farmers or through their official capacity to support organic farming. One organic producer explained about her close cooperation with the department of trade in exchanging information on trade fairs for organic or natural products.

One contentious issue discussed by the two groups was the roles of government in influencing organic farming in Indonesia, and they took different approaches to analyze this issue.

## Decision making and decentralization

The first group formulated the influence of government in the context of decision making under decentralized governance. Therefore, departments of agriculture at the village level are more influential than the ones at the district level as decision on priorities on agricultural development starts from this tier. Following this argument, farmers can technically access available government supports if they follow this mechanism. In general, they agreed that government is influential and the degree of influence should be specified according to the different administrative levels.

## Government as an enabler

In the second group, the discussion developed around the negative and positive elements of government involvement in organic agriculture. One participant explained that, in comparison to other countries where organic farming grows rapidly, Indonesian government can and should have huge influence in organic farming if coordinated and coherent policies are implemented. Cross-departmental cooperation among different ministries are also essential to ensure continuity in the development of organic farming. However, the limited achievement of Go Organic program indicates the shortcomings of government's approach in supporting organic farming.

## Government as an obstacle

Another section of the group argued that government regulations on organic agriculture and agriculture in general have posed negative influence on the development of organic agriculture. They argued that the historical development of organic agriculture as a social movement was mainly driven by concerns over environmental and farmer living condition. However, government intervention, for example, the continuous subsidy on petroleum-based agricultural inputs delivers ambiguous message to farmers, particularly on government's agenda to develop organic agriculture. In addition, the formulation of national regulations on organic farming also introduced organic certification which has been widely criticized by observers and practitioners in organic agriculture.

These two instances have altered the original aims of organic agriculture as a social movement, environmental conservation and farmer empowerment, toward market orientation.



## Social Network Analysis (SNA)

It is commonly used for investigating informal and formal interactions between different stakeholders.

Degree of centrality: the ratio between the number of links that is connected to a stakeholder and the number of all possible links in a network.

A stakeholder with high betweenness is influential as more information will pass through him or her.





**Figure 2.** Discussion on influence towers

## Key messages

Net-Map as a participatory method enables in our transdisciplinary approach to facilitate knowledge exchange between academic stakeholders and practitioners. The main findings on the institutional landscape of organic farming and on the debated topics of importance are:

1. The interconnections between NGOs, government agencies, private sectors, and communities are illustrated by the exchange of organic farming knowledge, inputs, and information on marketing channels among them.
2. One common issue among the participants was the importance of consumers
3. Under decentralization, village government is vital in deciding programs and priorities in agriculture, including organic farming
4. Cross-departmental cooperation among different ministries and coherent policies can contribute to the development of organic farming in the long run
5. However, current policies on agriculture and organic agriculture show otherwise

## IndORGANIC

**Research Project IndORGANIC**  
Prof. Martina Padmanabhan  
Chair of Comparative Development and  
Cultural Studies (Focus: Southeast Asia)

Dr.-Hans-Kapfinger-Straße 14b  
94032 Passau, Germany

**Author:** Dimas Dwi Laksmana  
**Contact:** Dimas.DwiLaksmana@uni-  
passau.de

Passau, September 2018



Bundesministerium  
für Bildung  
und Forschung