

# Collaborative Governance in Athlete Development: Strengthening Synergy Between Local Government and KONI in the Riau Islands Province

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## Abstract

This study analyzes the synergy between the Regional Government and the Indonesian National Sports Committee (KONI) in athlete development in the Province of the Riau Islands. The research focuses on collaborative governance in addressing problems such as limited sports facilities, inadequate funding, overlapping programs, and weak stakeholder coordination. The study applies the collaborative governance framework of Chris Ansell and Alison Gash, which includes starting conditions, institutional design, facilitative leadership, and collaborative processes. A qualitative descriptive method with a case study approach was employed. Data were collected through interviews, observations, and documentation involving the Youth and Sports Office, KONI administrators, coaches, and athletes. The findings reveal that collaboration has been implemented through training programs, competitions, talent development, and infrastructure support. However, the synergy remains less effective due to budget limitations, uneven infrastructure distribution, and insufficient coordination mechanisms. The study concludes that strengthening collaborative governance and stakeholder coordination is essential to improve sustainable athlete development and sports achievement in the Riau Islands Province.

## Keywords

Collaborative Governance; Athlete Development; KONI; Sports policy; Riau Islands Province.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Sports development has become an important component of national development in Indonesia because it contributes not only to athletic achievement but also to human resource development, social integration, public health, and national identity. The Indonesian government has strengthened its commitment to sports development through Law Number 11 of 2022 concerning Sports, which emphasizes the importance of systematic, integrated, and sustainable sports governance. This regulation encourages collaboration among stakeholders, including central and local governments, sports organizations, educational institutions, and the private sector, in order to improve national sports performance and create a more inclusive sports ecosystem.



In the regional context, the success of athlete development depends heavily on the synergy between local governments and sports institutions. The collaboration between regional authorities and the Indonesian National Sports Committee (KONI) plays a strategic role in organizing training programs, talent identification, competitions, infrastructure provision, and athlete management. Effective coordination among stakeholders is expected to create a sustainable athlete development system capable of producing competitive athletes at regional, national, and international levels.

To support athlete development programs, the government and KONI have implemented several collaborative activities and partnerships as presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Forms of Government and KONI Collaboration in Athlete Development

No	Aspect	Forms of Activities	Forms of Collaboration
1	Athlete and Coach Development	Training programs, athlete camps, competency development	Collaboration between Youth and Sports Office and KONI
2	Championships and Competitions	Regional and national tournaments and leagues	Partnerships with sports clubs, sponsors, and private sectors
3	Talent Identification Programs	Monitoring and selection of young athletes	Cooperation with schools, universities, and sports organizations
4	Workshops and Seminars	Training for coaches, referees, And sports administrators	Collaboration with educational institutions and national organizations
5	Infrastructure and Facilities Support	Procurement of sports facilities and equipment	Cooperation with government, sponsors, and sports federations

Source: Adapted from national sports policy documents, 2025.

However, sports development in the Province of the Riau Islands still faces various challenges. Several issues include overlapping training programs, weak coordination between the Regional Youth and Sports Office and KONI, unequal distribution of sports facilities, limited government funding, and insufficient private sector support. In addition, evaluation and monitoring mechanisms for athlete development programs have not been implemented comprehensively, making it difficult to measure the effectiveness of collaboration among stakeholders. These conditions indicate that athlete development has not yet been managed in a fully integrated and collaborative manner.

The existing problems related to athlete development in the Riau Islands Province are summarized in Table 2.

Table 2. Problems in Athlete Development in the Riau Islands Province

Aspect	Existing Conditions	Sources
Stakeholder Coordination	Training and competition programs often overlap coordination between KONI and the Youth and Sports Office is still weak	Hariankepri.com
Facilities and Infrastructure	Sports facilities are unevenly distributed across regions	Hariankepri.com
Funding and Support	Limited government budget and insufficient private sponsorship support	Kepri.antaraneews.com

Aspect	Existing Conditions	Sources
Monitoring and Evaluation	Program evaluation is not structured comprehensively	Matakepri.com

Source: Adapted from several online media sources, 2025.

The Regional Strategic Plan of the Youth and Sports Office of the Riau Islands Province for 2025–2029 also identifies several structural problems in regional sports services. Sports facilities and infrastructure have not met national standards and remain unevenly distributed across districts and municipalities. Furthermore, the athlete development system has not been implemented systematically, gradually, and sustainably. The quality and quantity of sports professionals, including certified coaches and trainers, are still inadequate, which affects the overall performance of sports development programs in the province.

To address these challenges, collaborative governance becomes an important approach in strengthening stakeholder synergy in sports development. According to Chris Ansell and Alison Gash, collaborative governance refers to a governance arrangement in which public institutions directly engage non-government stakeholders in collective decision-making processes that are formal, consensus-oriented, and deliberative. This concept emphasizes trust-building, institutional design, facilitative leadership, and collaborative processes as key components for achieving effective governance outcomes. In the context of athlete development, collaborative governance can strengthen coordination, improve resource sharing, and enhance collective commitment among stakeholders involved in sports management.

Previous studies have highlighted the importance of collaboration in sports governance. Research by Z. Amali emphasized that government trust and policy alignment significantly influence the effectiveness of national athlete development programs. Andreas R. Purba found that athlete performance is highly dependent on coordination between KONI, government institutions, and supporting stakeholders, while Sarah Fatmawati identified infrastructure limitations and insufficient certified coaches as major obstacles in sports development programs. Although these studies discuss sports governance and athlete development, limited research specifically examines the collaborative relationship between the regional government and KONI in the Province of the Riau Islands.

Therefore, this study aims to analyze the synergy between the Regional Government and KONI in athlete development in the Province of the Riau Islands by applying the collaborative governance framework of Ansell and Gash. This research is expected to provide a comprehensive understanding of stakeholder collaboration, identify factors affecting the effectiveness of athlete development programs, and formulate strategic recommendations to strengthen sustainable sports governance and athlete achievement in the region.

## 2. METHOD

<b>Aspect</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>Research Approach</b>	This study employed a qualitative descriptive approach with a case study design to analyze the synergy between the Regional Government and KONI in athlete development in the Province of the Riau Islands.
<b>Research Location</b>	The research was conducted at the Youth and Sports Office and KONI of the Riau Islands Province as the main institutions responsible for sports development programs.
<b>Research Informants</b>	Informants consisted of officials from the Youth and Sports Office, KONI administrators, coaches, and athletes involved in athlete development activities.
<b>Data Collection Techniques</b>	Data were collected through: 1) in-depth interviews, 2) participatory observation, and 3) documentation studies involving regulations, strategic plans, evaluation reports, and sports development programs.
<b>Data Analysis</b>	Data were analyzed using thematic analysis through data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. The analysis referred to the collaborative governance model of Chris Ansell and Alison Gash.
<b>Data Validity</b>	Data validity was ensured through source triangulation, method triangulation, member checking, and audit trails to maintain the credibility and consistency of the research findings.

## 3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

### Starting Conditions

The findings reveal that the initial conditions of collaboration between the Regional Government of the Riau Islands Province and KONI were influenced by several structural and managerial challenges. The athlete development system in the province has not yet operated optimally due to limited financial support, unequal distribution of sports facilities, and weak coordination among stakeholders. Several informants explained that athlete training programs and sports competitions were often implemented separately by different institutions without comprehensive coordination. As a result, some activities overlapped, while others were not implemented effectively.

The geographical condition of the Riau Islands Province as an archipelagic region also became a significant challenge in athlete development. The distance between islands affects access to sports facilities, training centers, and competitions. Athletes from remote areas often experience difficulties in accessing adequate training infrastructure and professional coaching services. These conditions create disparities in athlete development among districts and municipalities.

In addition, limited government funding remains one of the primary obstacles in supporting sustainable sports programs. Although the government has allocated budgets for athlete development, the amount is still insufficient to meet the increasing needs for infrastructure, competitions, athlete welfare, and coaching programs. Support from the private sector and sponsors has also not been maximized, reducing opportunities for broader collaboration in sports development.

Despite these limitations, the findings indicate that both the Regional Government and KONI share a common commitment to improving sports achievement in the province. This shared objective became an important foundation for establishing collaboration among stakeholders. The existence of trust and mutual understanding between institutions gradually developed through routine coordination meetings, joint training programs, and collaborative sports activities. Stakeholders recognized that athlete development could not be managed by a single institution alone, but required integrated cooperation involving government agencies, sports organizations, coaches, athletes, educational institutions, and the community.

Table 1. Starting Conditions of Collaboration

Aspect	Findings
Stakeholder Trust	Trust gradually developed through routine coordination and collaborative sports programs
Funding Support	Government funding remained limited and private sponsorship was not optimal
Sports Infrastructure	Facilities and training centers were unevenly distributed across regions
Coordination System	Coordination among institutions was still weak and often overlapping
Geographical Challenges	Archipelagic conditions affected access to athlete development services

The findings support the collaborative governance theory of Chris Ansell and Alison Gash, which emphasizes that initial trust, resource balance, and previous collaborative experiences strongly influence the success of collaboration processes.

### Institutional Design

The institutional design of athlete development in the Riau Islands Province was formally supported by national regulations, regional strategic plans, and sports development policies. The implementation of Law Number 11 of 2022 concerning Sports and the National Sports Grand Design (DBON) became important references for regional sports governance. The Youth and Sports Office and KONI functioned as the primary institutions responsible for athlete development programs in the province. The study found that institutional collaboration was implemented through various forms of cooperation, including athlete training programs, sports competitions, workshops, coaching development, and infrastructure support. Formal coordination was conducted through meetings, annual planning discussions, and joint evaluation activities. In several cases, cooperation also involved schools, universities, sports clubs, and private organizations to support athlete development activities.

However, the institutional design still faced several weaknesses. Communication mechanisms among stakeholders were not fully integrated, and information sharing between institutions was often delayed. Some informants stated that policy implementation at the district and municipal levels was inconsistent because coordination systems were not clearly standardized. Furthermore, monitoring and evaluation systems for athlete development programs were not conducted comprehensively, making it difficult to measure program effectiveness and identify areas requiring improvement.

Another issue identified in the study was the limited number of certified coaches and sports professionals. Human resource limitations affected the quality of training programs and athlete mentoring processes. Several sports branches lacked professional trainers, reducing opportunities for athletes to achieve maximum performance.

Table 2. Institutional Design Findings

<b>Institutional Aspect</b>	<b>Findings</b>
Regulatory Support	Supported by national and regional sports policies
Coordination Mechanism	Conducted through meetings and collaborative planning
Stakeholder Involvement	Included government, KONI, schools, clubs, and communities
Monitoring and Evaluation	Not yet comprehensive and systematic
Human Resources	Limited number of certified coaches and sports professionals

From the collaborative governance perspective, institutional design should ensure transparency, participation, accountability, and equal stakeholder involvement. The findings demonstrate that although institutional arrangements already exist, stronger integration and policy consistency are still required to improve collaboration effectiveness.

### **Facilitative Leadership**

Leadership became one of the key factors influencing collaboration effectiveness in athlete development. Leaders from the Regional Government and KONI played important roles in facilitating communication, resolving conflicts, and maintaining stakeholder commitment toward shared goals. The findings indicate that facilitative leadership contributed significantly to strengthening cooperation among institutions involved in sports development. The leadership approach emphasized participatory decision-making and consensus-building. Coordination meetings were regularly conducted to discuss training programs, athlete preparation, funding allocation, and competition schedules. Leaders also acted as mediators when disagreements occurred between institutions or sports organizations. Through facilitative leadership, stakeholders were encouraged to participate actively in planning and implementing sports programs.

Several informants stated that effective leadership created a more positive collaborative environment because stakeholders felt included in decision-making processes. Communication between institutions became more open, allowing problems to be discussed collectively. This condition strengthened mutual trust and reduced institutional conflicts. Nevertheless, leadership effectiveness still encountered several obstacles. Bureaucratic procedures sometimes delayed decision-making processes, particularly regarding budget allocation and program approval. In addition, leadership continuity became a challenge because organizational changes occasionally affected policy consistency and coordination patterns.

Table 3. Facilitative Leadership Findings

Leadership Aspect	Findings
Communication	Leaders maintained regular coordination and dialogue
Conflict Resolution	Conflicts were managed through discussion and mediation
Stakeholder Participation	Stakeholders were encouraged to contribute actively
Decision-Making	Decisions were generally based on consensus
Leadership Challenges	Bureaucratic procedures and policy inconsistency affected effectiveness

The findings confirm that facilitative leadership is essential in collaborative governance because leaders function not only as administrators but also as mediators and motivators who encourage stakeholder participation and maintain collaboration sustainability.

### **Collaborative Process**

The collaborative process between the Regional Government and KONI was implemented through various sports development activities. These included athlete training camps, talent identification programs, regional competitions, coaching workshops, seminars, and infrastructure development. The collaboration also involved educational institutions, sports clubs, and local communities to support athlete development comprehensively. Routine face-to-face meetings became an important mechanism for maintaining collaboration among stakeholders. These meetings allowed institutions to exchange information, discuss program implementation, and evaluate athlete performance collectively. Stakeholders also coordinated resource allocation, competition schedules, and athlete preparation strategies through these interactions.

The study found that collaborative activities improved communication and strengthened institutional relationships. Several athletes achieved better performance after participating in integrated training programs and regional competitions. Workshops and seminars also contributed to improving the competence of coaches and sports administrators. However, the collaborative process was still constrained by several limitations. Unequal infrastructure distribution continued to affect athlete access to quality training facilities. Some regions lacked adequate sports equipment, training

venues, and certified coaches. Funding limitations also restricted the implementation of long-term athlete development programs.

Another challenge identified in the study was the absence of integrated digital systems for sports management and athlete monitoring. Most coordination processes were still conducted manually, causing inefficiencies in data management and communication among institutions.

Table 4. Collaborative Process Findings

<b>Collaborative Activities</b>	<b>Outcomes</b>
Athlete Training Programs	Improved athlete competence and performance
Sports Competitions	Increased athlete participation and experience
Workshops and Seminars	Enhanced coaching and sports management capacity
Coordination Meetings	Strengthened communication among stakeholders
Infrastructure Support	Improved training facilities, although unevenly distributed

The findings indicate that collaborative governance has positively contributed to athlete development in the Riau Islands Province. Nevertheless, stronger coordination systems, sustainable funding, integrated infrastructure development, and professional human resource improvement are still required to maximize collaboration effectiveness.

## Discussion

The findings of this study indicate that collaborative governance between the Regional Government of the Riau Islands Province and KONI has become an important foundation for strengthening athlete development programs in the region. The collaboration reflects the concept of collaborative governance proposed by Chris Ansell and Alison Gash, which emphasizes participation, collective decision-making, institutional cooperation, and trust-building among stakeholders. In the context of sports development, collaboration is necessary because athlete development cannot be managed effectively by a single institution. Instead, it requires integrated cooperation among government agencies, sports organizations, educational institutions, coaches, athletes, communities, and the private sector.

The study found that the initial conditions of collaboration significantly influenced the effectiveness of athlete development programs. The existence of shared goals between the government and KONI created a positive basis for collaboration, particularly in improving sports achievement and strengthening regional athlete development systems. However, several structural challenges reduced the effectiveness of the collaboration process. Limited funding became one of the most dominant issues affecting sports governance in the Riau Islands Province. Government budgets allocated for sports development were still insufficient to support comprehensive athlete training, infrastructure

development, competition participation, and athlete welfare programs. As a result, many sports programs were implemented with limited resources and could not reach all regions equally.

The geographical characteristics of the Riau Islands Province as an archipelagic region also created significant challenges for collaborative sports governance. The wide distance between islands complicated athlete mobility, coordination, and access to training facilities. Athletes living in remote islands often experienced limited opportunities to participate in intensive coaching programs and regional competitions. These findings demonstrate that geographical factors strongly influence policy implementation and resource distribution in regional sports development. Therefore, regional sports policies should be designed based on local conditions and regional characteristics to ensure more equitable athlete development opportunities.

The findings also demonstrate that institutional design plays a crucial role in determining the sustainability of collaboration. The existence of formal regulations, strategic plans, and sports development programs has provided a legal and administrative framework for cooperation between the government and KONI. However, the implementation of institutional coordination has not yet been fully integrated. Communication mechanisms among stakeholders were sometimes ineffective, resulting in overlapping programs, delayed information exchange, and inconsistent policy implementation across districts and municipalities. This condition indicates that collaborative governance requires not only formal institutional arrangements but also effective coordination systems capable of supporting continuous interaction among stakeholders.

Another important issue identified in the study is the limited evaluation and monitoring system for athlete development programs. Most sports programs focused more on implementation rather than comprehensive performance measurement. As a result, stakeholders experienced difficulties in assessing whether collaborative programs had achieved their intended objectives. Evaluation systems are essential because they provide information regarding policy effectiveness, program sustainability, and areas requiring improvement. Without integrated monitoring systems, collaborative governance may become less adaptive and less responsive to emerging challenges in sports development.

From the leadership perspective, the study confirms that facilitative leadership contributes significantly to maintaining stakeholder collaboration. Leaders from the Regional Government and KONI functioned not only as policy implementers but also as mediators and facilitators in resolving conflicts and encouraging stakeholder participation. Facilitative leadership strengthened communication among institutions and created opportunities for collective decision-making processes. Stakeholders were more willing to participate actively because they felt included in discussions and policy implementation processes. This finding supports collaborative governance

theory, which emphasizes that leadership should encourage participation, maintain trust, and create a collaborative environment that supports shared goals.

Nevertheless, leadership effectiveness still encountered several obstacles. Bureaucratic procedures and administrative processes often slowed decision-making and program implementation. In some cases, changes in organizational leadership also influenced policy continuity and coordination patterns. These conditions indicate that collaborative governance requires leadership stability and institutional consistency to maintain long-term cooperation among stakeholders. The collaborative process itself showed several positive outcomes for athlete development in the Riau Islands Province. Joint training programs, competitions, workshops, and talent identification activities improved communication and strengthened relationships among stakeholders. Athletes gained greater opportunities to participate in competitions and improve their skills through integrated coaching programs. Workshops and seminars also contributed to improving the competence of coaches and sports administrators, which is important for enhancing the quality of athlete development systems.

However, the study also found that collaborative programs were still constrained by unequal infrastructure distribution and limited professional human resources. Several regions lacked adequate sports facilities, training centers, and certified coaches. These limitations reduced the effectiveness of athlete development and created disparities in sports achievement among districts and municipalities. The findings indicate that infrastructure development should become a priority in strengthening collaborative sports governance. Equal access to sports facilities is necessary to ensure that athletes from all regions have similar opportunities to develop their talents and compete at higher levels. In addition, the role of the private sector and community organizations in sports development has not yet been maximized. Most athlete development programs still depended heavily on government funding, while private sponsorship and community participation remained limited. In collaborative governance, stakeholder diversity is essential because it allows resource sharing, innovation, and broader public participation. Therefore, increasing private sector involvement and strengthening community participation could improve the sustainability of sports development programs in the Riau Islands Province.

The findings of this study are consistent with previous research emphasizing that sports achievement is closely related to institutional collaboration and governance effectiveness. Effective sports governance requires transparency, accountability, stakeholder participation, and integrated policy implementation. Collaborative governance enables institutions to share resources, coordinate programs, and solve public problems collectively. In the context of athlete development, collaboration also strengthens social trust and institutional commitment, which are important factors in maintaining sustainable sports programs. Overall, this study demonstrates that collaborative governance has

provided important contributions to athlete development in the Riau Islands Province, although several structural and managerial challenges still limit its effectiveness. Strengthening institutional coordination, increasing funding support, improving infrastructure distribution, enhancing human resource quality, and developing integrated evaluation systems are essential steps to improve collaborative sports governance. Through stronger collaboration among stakeholders, athlete development programs can become more sustainable, inclusive, and capable of improving regional and national sports achievement in the future.

## CONCLUSIONS

The study concludes that the synergy between the Regional Government of the Riau Islands Province and KONI has played an important role in supporting athlete development through collaborative training programs, competitions, talent identification, workshops, and infrastructure support. The implementation of collaborative governance has encouraged stakeholder participation, strengthened communication, and increased collective commitment in improving regional sports achievement. However, the collaboration has not yet operated optimally due to several challenges, including limited funding, unequal distribution of sports facilities, weak coordination mechanisms, and the limited availability of certified coaches and sports professionals. In addition, monitoring and evaluation systems for athlete development programs are still not fully integrated, affecting the effectiveness and sustainability of sports governance.

Based on the findings, strengthening collaborative governance is necessary through improved institutional coordination, transparent communication, sustainable funding support, equitable infrastructure development, and enhancement of human resource capacity in the sports sector. By strengthening collaboration among stakeholders, athlete development in the Riau Islands Province can become more effective, sustainable, and capable of improving regional and national sports achievements.

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