

At a Glance

SKALA in East Nusa Tenggara

September 2024

Introduction

East Nusa Tenggara (*Nusa Tenggara Timur* or NTT) was established in 1958 based on Law No. 64/1958. The province's administrative structure includes 21 districts and over 3,000 villages, with Kupang serving as the provincial capital and administrative center. Home to three large islands, Flores, Timor, and Sumba, and surrounded by over 600 smaller islands, NTT is known for its rich culture and natural beauty which contributes to a growing tourism sector. However, rugged terrain, a semi-arid climate, and disaster risks sometimes hinder access to essential services like healthcare and education. Long dry seasons and short rainy periods, combined with the effects of climate change can make water scarce and cause agricultural challenges.

The NTT government has been addressing development challenges through a series of fiscal reforms, policy frameworks, and inclusive planning processes. Faced

with declining local revenue, NTT is focusing on improving regional financial management to deliver inclusive basic services. The government has also prioritized gender equality, disability, and social inclusion (GEDSI) by integrating these themes in key policy documents. Collaborative efforts between provincial departments, civil society, and NGOs have strengthened public fiscal management, improved the use of data for evidence-based planning, and enhanced community participation.

SKALA¹ works with the NTT provincial government to strengthen the participation of vulnerable groups in development planning, strengthen the use of reliable data and analysis, increase regional financial capacity, and strengthen the quality of public spending. SKALA's NTT office became operational in May 2023.

Figure 1. Key Administrative Data



Population:
5.65 million
(BPS-Statistics Indonesia, 2024)



Number of civil servants:
117.429
(National Civil Service Agency, 2023)



Area:
46,446.64 km²
(BPS-Statistics Indonesia, 2023)



Administrative center and capital city:
Kupang City



Regional Fiscal Capacity:
IDR 4.4 trillion (2022), with 50-70% from regional fiscal transfers
(BPS-Statistics Indonesia, 2023)

1. *Sinergi dan Kolaborasi untuk Akselerasi Layanan Dasar* (SKALA) is an Australia-Indonesia Partnership Program aimed at supporting the Government of Indonesia's efforts to reduce poverty and inequality by improving basic-service provision to poor and vulnerable communities in less-developed regions.

Figure 2. Key Socioeconomic Data



Gross Domestic Product (GDP):

Rp128.52 trillion

(BPS-Statistics Indonesia, 2023)



Unemployment Rate:

3.17%

(BPS-Statistics Indonesia, 2024)



Poverty rate:

19.48%

(BPS-Statistics Indonesia, 2024)



1.84%

of population over 5 years old with disabilities

(BPS-Statistics Indonesia, 2023)



Gini coefficient:

0.316

(BPS-Statistics Indonesia, 2024)



Human Development Index:

68.40

(BPS-Statistics Indonesia, 2023)



Enrolment Rates (Net):

Elementary : 96.62%

Junior High : 94.89%

Senior High : 75.93%

(BPS-Statistics Indonesia, 2023)



Maternal mortality rate:

316 per 100.000 live births

(BPS-Statistics Indonesia, 2020)



Infant mortality rate:

25.67 per 1000 live births

(BPS-Statistics Indonesia, 2023)



Stunting:

37.9%

(Indonesia Health Survey, 2023)

Economic and Social Development

NTT has made notable progress in economic and social development in recent years. The province has leveraged its natural assets for tourism, agriculture, and fisheries, to spur economic growth, recording a gross domestic product of IDR 128.52 trillion in 2023. Agriculture and tourism sectors offer significant potential for long-term prosperity. Through reforms, the provincial government seeks to unlock NTT's untapped potential to reduce poverty, boost productivity, and improve access to essential services like education, healthcare and clean water. NTT is investing in infrastructure development, such as better road networks and electricity coverage to unlock new economic avenues, particularly in tourism and agriculture. Additionally, by focusing on human resource development, job creation, and inclusive policies, the province is working to empower its communities and drive sustainable and equitable development.



SKALA's Support to Improve Inclusive Basic Services in NTT

One of the primary responsibilities of local governments is to deliver public services. SKALA supports its partner local governments in these efforts. In NTT, the provincial government oversaw the establishment and operationalisation of SKALA's governance structures. The formation of the Provincial Program Committee through a Governor's Decree is expected to enable coordination among regional government departments. SKALA also aligns its Annual Work Plan with regional planning documents and initiatives. This effort ensures that SKALA's support is fully aligned with and enhances the achievement of government priorities. SKALA promotes a collaborative governance approach, built on shared understanding, partnership between government agencies, and synergy, all of which contribute to improving the effectiveness of regional governance.



Promoting Gender Equality, Disability, and Social Inclusion (GEDSI)

The NTT government has made substantial progress in advancing policies that encourage disability inclusion, setting a strong example for other regions. In 2020, NTT formed a team to draft the Regional Action Plan for People

with Disabilities (RAD PD), which was completed in 2023 and will be implemented between 2024-2026. SKALA facilitated collaboration between the provincial government and disability representatives at provincial, regency, and national levels to develop the RAD PD. Civil Society Organizations (CSOs)² played a key role in ensuring the RAD PD met the needs of people with disabilities and helped integrate it into the regional long-term development plan (2025-2045). SKALA is also helping to revitalize the Civil Society Network (*Jaringan Masyarakat Sipil* or JMS) to promote the inclusion of vulnerable groups in planning, particularly during district-provincial Development Planning Conferences (*musrenbang*).

Additionally, the NTT government strengthened its Gender Mainstreaming initiative, earning its first-ever *Anugerah Parahita Ekapraya* award in the *Pratama* category in 2023. SKALA supported this effort through technical guidance on Gender Pathway Analysis, Gender Action Budgeting, and by revitalizing the gender mainstreaming working group. In another milestone, NTT has developed a Regional Action Plan (RAD) for the Elderly to empower and provide basic services and social protection to senior citizens.



Using Data and Analytics for Better Planning and Service Delivery

Aligned with the national One Data policy, the NTT Government is improving the quality of data for development planning by revitalizing the NTT One Data Forum. The local Development Planning, Research, and Innovation Agency (BAPPERIDA) and the Communication and Informatics Office have teamed up to create the NTT One Data Standard Operating Procedures and the One Data Action Plan. These will inform revisions to Governor Regulation No. 64/2020 so that NTT's One Data aligns with the One Data for Domestic Government (*Satu Data Pemerintahan dalam Negeri* or SDPDN) guidelines.

NTT is also leading efforts to promote data use in village information systems. In Southwest Sumba, village operators were trained to use SEPAKAT³ Edu, a Learning Management System, and five more regencies have requested similar support to strengthen SEPAKAT Village in 2024.

In collaboration with SKALA, NTT is integrating multiple datasets to support poverty reduction. These include the Integrated Social Welfare Data (DTKS),

Targeting Data for Extreme Poverty Eradication (P3KE), sectoral data from government units (OPD), and the socioeconomic registry (REGSOSEK). This data synchronization ensures comprehensive, accurate data for planning and budgeting. NTT will use this integrated data to tackle extreme poverty in four districts: Kupang, South Central Timor, East Manggarai, and Southwest Sumba. The data will also support the stunting prevention program funded by the NTT Provincial Incentive Fund. Additionally, REGSOSEK master trainers in NTT are actively supporting districts and cities in using REGSOSEK data for planning, budgeting, and to create action plans for vulnerable groups, including the elderly and disabled. This effort further highlights NTT's commitment to providing accurate data and promoting inclusive, sustainable development policies.



Enhancing Fiscal Capacity

The NTT government has taken major steps to increase locally generated revenue by enacting Regional Regulation No. 1/2024 on Regional Taxes and Levies, aligned with Law HKPD 1/2022⁴. To strengthen implementation, NTT issued Governor Regulations No. 8 on Regional Levies and No. 9 on Regional Taxes in 2024 to outline procedures for collecting levies and taxes, and facilitated agreements with 22 regencies and cities to enhance the efficiency of tax collection. Starting in 2025, new tax objects will include heavy equipment and mineral taxes, along with new levies for parking on provincial roads and sales of regional products like livestock, organic fertilizers, seeds, and local crafts. Additionally, as a result of better reporting on Minimum Service Standards (MSS), NTT's fiscal capacity received a boost from the general allocation fund (*Dana Alokasi Umum* or DAU) block grant, which increased by 21% between 2023 and 2024, compared to IDR 1.37 trillion the previous year. This expanded fiscal space enables NTT to better finance essential services and programs. SKALA also supports management of fiscal transfers in NTT by ensuring the tagging of special activity programs through DAU grants to finance MSS and securing funding for people with disabilities through regional planning documents.

2. Key CSOs involved included GARAMIN, FORMASI Disabilitas, PERTUNI, FORSADIK, KDD, PERMATA, PERSANI, TABOR, and KIPDA.
3. Integrated Regsosek Data-Based Development Planning System.
4. Financial Relations between the Central and Regional Governments (*Hubungan Keuangan antara Pemerintah Pusat dan Pemerintah Daerah*)



Improving Quality of Spending: Planning for Minimum Service Standards

The provincial government is dedicated to improving the achievement of MSS. To this end, NTT issued the 2023-2027 MSS Regional Action Plan through Governor Regulation No. 41/2024 and Decree No. 161 of the MSS Implementation Secretariat which contain guidelines and operational steps to fulfil MSS targets. NTT developed MSS Action Plans for the province and districts, strengthened coordination and supervision through the Provincial Government Bureau to improve MSS reporting and achievements, and collaborated with the Ministry of Home Affairs to build the capacity of government departments in the four stages of MSS implementation. This raised the provincial MSS Achievement Indicators to 81.48%, which led to the increase in the DAU Block Grant for 2024. SKALA

also supports capacity building efforts to improve the ability of the NTT MSS team to report on MSS in a timely manner, and to improve the performance of the MSS Implementation teams. Additionally, MSS and GEDSI Action Plans, and data like REGSOSEK have been included in the 2025-2045 regional long- and medium-term development plans which will ensure alignment of development objectives, effective budgeting and improve the quality of public services. NTT has aligned the plans of all of its 22 districts/city with provincial and central guidelines. In terms of budgeting, NTT has also integrated MSS and developed monitoring tools that incorporate GEDSI elements to collect disaggregated data, based on gender and disability.

SKALA's 2024-2025 Work Plan in NTT:

THEME	Focus Areas
Gender Equality, Disability and Social Inclusion (GEDSI)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitate collaboration between the Civil Society Network and the NTT provincial government to improve inclusive planning and budgeting for vulnerable groups. Build Civil Society Network capacity on data use, GEDSI, and MSS to enhance their role in regional planning and advocacy for vulnerable groups. Assist the NTT Provincial Government to create a collaborative model with the Civil Society Network for inclusive planning and budgeting.
Strengthen Data and Analytics (D&A)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assist NTT to strengthen One Data Indonesia through regulations supporting One Regional Data. Promote the creation of the NTT One Data Portal and enhance the provincial government's ability to use it. Support data integration to improve social protection programs in NTT. Promote the use of REGSOSEK data in planning and budgeting by training trainers and supporting access rights for Regencies/Cities. Expand the village-level information system using SEPAKAT Village by training data managers and enhancing cooperation with universities.
Improve Regional Fiscal Capacity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assist in developing regulations and policies on regional taxes and levies. Support the creation and implementation of business plans to boost local revenue. Support the government to prepare inclusive budgeting by drafting supporting regulations and building capacity at provincial and district levels.
Enhance Quality of Spending (MSS)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support the Provincial Coordination, Coaching and Supervision function to improve the MSS Achievement Index by building capacity in the four stages of MSS implementation. Work with the NTT MSS team to help regencies/cities prepare MSS regulations, action plans, and form their MSS Implementation Teams. Facilitate integration of the MSS Action Plan into Regional Planning.
Program Governance (PPC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support for SKALA program governance in NTT Province