



ARTICLE

Synergy of Sovereignty and Society

The Penta-Helix Model for Integrated Governance on the RI-RDTL Border

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Abstract: Land border management between the Republic of Indonesia (RI) and the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste (RDTL) is hindered by structural fragmentation, resulting in a dichotomy between security and welfare approaches. Although policy has shifted from a hard border approach to a soft border, its implementation is still dominated by the sectoral egos of security and development institutions. This situation results in grandiose infrastructure development, often masking underlying problems such as poverty and low institutional capacity. This study uses a qualitative approach with policy document analysis and semi-structured interviews in Belu Regency. This article aims to criticize the weaknesses of the existing dual governance model and propose a more effective integrated solution. Using the theoretical framework of the Penta-Helix Model, this study analyzes the roles of the Government, Academics, Business Actors, Communities, and the Media. The results show that the participation of non-state actors remains peripheral and uninstitutionalized. As a key contribution, this article proposes an Integrated Border Governance Model (IBGM). This model rejects the concept of dual Centers of Gravity and instead proposes the establishment of a co-chaired Governance Council for consensus-based decision-making. The IBGM model offers a path to achieving national security through a synergy between sovereignty and welfare, transforming the border from a dividing line to a bridge of shared prosperity and security.

Keywords: Collaborative Governance; RI-RDTL Border; Penta-Helix Model; Human Security; Integrated Governance.

1. Introduction

The land border between the Republic of Indonesia (RI) and the Democratic Republic of Timor Leste (RDTL) is a crucial national space, understood not merely as a static demarcation line, but rather as a dynamic process of 'bordering' (van Houtum, 2005). This region also serves as a microcosm of post-conflict bilateral relations, where everyday community interactions shape the practice of 'everyday peace' (Mac Ginty, 2014). Despite being overshadowed by a long historical memory (Kent, 2012). Recognizing this complexity, Indonesia's border management paradigm has undergone a significant shift. The metaphor of the nation's 'front porch,' promoted by the National Border Management Agency (BNPP), marks an effort to move away from 'inward-looking' policies that focus on domestic interests over international ones, and instead position the border as the face and gateway to sovereignty.

However, in practice, the 'front porch' metaphor actually creates a profound paradox. On the one hand, state sovereignty is symbolically displayed through the construction of magnificent infrastructure, such as the Motaain State Border Post (PLBN), which required a significant investment of Rp82 billion (Simorangkir, 2016). On the other hand, excessive focus on infrastructure or physical achievements risks overlooking socioeconomic complexities at the local level (Yahya et al., 2024). Empirical data from Belu Regency, which serves as the PLBN Motaain, confirms this disparity. This region, which should be the face of the nation, still struggles with a poverty rate of 15.37% and a Human Development Index (HDI) score of 67.50. Compared to the national average, Belu Regency's HDI still lags significantly behind (Universitas Gadjah Mada & Pemerintah Kabupaten Belu, 2024). As a result, the 'front porch' can actually turn into a policy 'blind spot' (Fukuyama, 2004), where the reality of poverty and low institutional capacity lies behind the facade of magnificent infrastructure.

At the root of this paradox lies persistent and long-standing policy fragmentation. Theoretically, policy has shifted from a purely security approach (hard border policy) to a soft border policy that attempts to integrate security with prosperity. However, in practice, this integration is very weak. Border management is still dominated by 'sectoral egos,' with various ministries and institutions operating within their own silos without synergistic coordination. This dichotomy creates a counterproductive policy gap. Strict immigration and customs regulations actually hamper the traditional livelihoods of cross-border communities (Nino et al., 2025).

Meanwhile, empowerment programs from the Ministry of Villages and Development of Disadvantaged Regions, such as Local Economic Development, have not been effectively integrated with the logistics and access provided by the PLBN (Muslikhin, 2024). As a result, the existing coordination is still sectoral and has not been systematically patterned, leaving communities in the 'front porch' areas in a condition that is still economically and socially marginalized.

This fragmentation is not merely a legacy of the past, but a current challenge that continues to weaken national resilience. Border regions remain vulnerable to a wide spectrum of threats, from human smuggling and narcotics to potential horizontal conflict. This vulnerability is exacerbated by unresolved welfare issues, creating a vicious cycle that threatens stability. Various improvement efforts have been made. In Timor-Leste, systems such as the Migration Information Data Analysis System (MIDAS) were implemented to strengthen border management. Meanwhile, the Indonesian National Board for Border Management (BNPP) continues to call for synergy, which is also reflected in the strategy towards Indonesia Emas 2045. However, the fact that this call continues to be repeated indicates that technical

approaches and moral appeals alone are insufficient to resolve existing structural problems.

The inadequacy of these partial solutions suggests that the root of the problem lies at the level of governance design itself. Conventional approaches have proven insufficient in proposing a collaborative structure capable of permanently breaking down the security-prosperity dichotomy. Awareness of this institutional design failure is the basis for this article.

Therefore, to address this fundamental gap, this article proposes a Penta-Helix-based integrated governance model as a solution. The central thesis is that a collaborative framework involving five actors—Government, Academics, Business Actors, Communities, and the Media—is the most robust theoretical and practical lens for creating an integrated and sustainable border management system. As an original contribution, this article not only critiques the dual models (Collaboration Management Model on Border Prosperity and Security) that have operated independently, but also proposes a unified model designed to systematically and permanently address the security-prosperity dichotomy. Thus, it is hoped that this model will not only provide a substantive contribution to the treasury of Public Administration and Border Studies but will also become a beacon for formulating more effective and community-friendly border policies.

2. Methods

This study uses a qualitative approach with a descriptive-analytical method. The purpose of this method is to describe in depth the phenomenon of RI-RDTL border governance and analyze it using a relevant theoretical lens. The Research Approach, Qualitative descriptive-analytical, was chosen to provide a holistic understanding of the complexity of the problems at the border. This approach allows researchers to examine and interpret textual data, as well as construct strong theoretical arguments. Data Sources, The data used secondary data, which include: 1) Literature Study: Scientific articles, journals, books, and dissertations related to border governance, the Penta-Helix model, and human security, 2) Policy Documents: Government regulations, official reports of the National Agency for the Assessment and Application of Technology (BNPP), and other strategic documents related to the management of the RI border, and 3) News and Reports: Information from the mass media and reports from related institutions that provide the latest context on issues at the border.

Data Analysis Techniques: The data analysis technique used is content analysis. The process includes; 1) Data Collection: Collecting all relevant secondary data from various sources, 2) Data Reduction: Selecting and focusing data relevant to the research topic, namely the security-welfare dichotomy and the role of actors in border governance, 3) Data Presentation: Organizing data in narrative and tabular form (such as Table 1 and Table 2) to facilitate understanding, 4) Conclusion Drawing: Analyzing the presented data using the Penta-Helix Model framework to identify gaps (diagnostic) and formulate a new model (prescriptive). Thus, this research method will systematically support the main argument of the article, namely that the Penta-Helix Model is the most appropriate framework for analyzing and formulating integrated governance solutions at the RI-RDTL border.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1. Theoretical Basis: From State-Based Management to Multi-actor Collaboration

3.1.1. The Evolution of Governance: Beyond the Weberian State

This section briefly traces the evolution of public administration theory from the traditional hierarchical model of Government Management, which is rooted in the classical definition of management according to [Terry and Rue \(2019\)](#) as the achievement of predetermined goals through the efforts of others with the main functions of planning, organizing, motivating, and controlling (POAC). This concept was then adopted and developed in the context of Indonesian governance by experts such as [Suradinata \(2014\)](#) towards a contemporary paradigm of Collaborative Governance.

The core concept, taken from [Ansell and Gash \(2007\)](#), is a shift towards a formal, consensus-oriented collective process, in which public institutions directly involve non-state stakeholders in the shared decision-making process. As defined by [Ansell and Gash \(2007\)](#), collaborative governance is a governance arrangement in which one or more public institutions directly engage non-state stakeholders in a formal, consensus-oriented, and deliberative process of shared decision-making aimed at creating or implementing public policy or managing public programs or assets. This framework builds theoretical legitimacy for systematically involving non-state actors—such as business actors, communities, and academics—into core state functions, which in this context is integrated border governance.

3.1.2. Reconceptualizing National Security As Human Security

This concept connects the policy shift from hard to soft borders with the broader academic discourse on Human Security. Traditional security paradigms, with their focus on territorial defense and external military threats, have proven inadequate to capture the complexity of vulnerabilities in border regions ([Buzan & Hansen, 2009](#)). This security approach ignores various non-military threats such as economic vulnerability, environmental degradation, and social rift, which are the main sources of instability in border areas. In contrast, the prosperity approach aligns with the principles of human security, which broaden the concept of security to encompass economic, social, political, and environmental well-being ([Duffield, 2001](#)). The second-generation Human Security Framework highlights the need for a multidimensional and collaborative approach to border management, which is often overlooked in existing policies. This is crucial, emphasizing that national security in border areas cannot be achieved if local populations feel insecure in their daily lives. Poor well-being itself can pose a national security threat by fueling instability, crime, and vulnerability to external influences. The ultimate goal is not a balance between security and well-being, but rather a synthesis of both under an integrated human security framework.

3.1.3. The Penta-Helix Model: An Integrative Framework for Collaborative Governance

The Penta-Helix model serves as the primary theoretical foundation of this article. This model evolved from the Triple Helix (Academia-Business-Government) by adding Community and Media, creating a more holistic ecosystem for innovation and development. It is a framework for multi-stakeholder collaboration to solve complex social problems. The use of this model as a framework for analyzing stakeholder

roles has been applied in various contexts, such as smart city development, tourism village development, and addressing social issues.

The role of the five helixes can be described as follows:

- a. Government (Regulator/Controller): Provides political and legal capital, sets policies, allocates resources, and ensures stability. The government acts as a regulator and facilitator;
- b. Academics (Knowledge Power/Formulators): Act as independent sources of knowledge, innovation, research, and analysis; provide capacity building and develop human resources. Academics function as formulators and facilitators;
- c. Business Actors (Enablers): Encourage economic growth, provide venture capital, create jobs, and develop infrastructure through mechanisms such as Public Private Partnerships (PPPs);
- d. Community (Accelerator/Social Force): Represents local needs and knowledge, ensures cultural authenticity, acts as a direct participant and beneficiary, and provides social legitimacy. The community acts as an accelerator;
- e. Media (Expander/Brand Image Strength): Disseminates information, ensures transparency, shapes public perception, and acts as a watchdog. The media serves to expand the reach of information and promotions.

Implementing this framework is not without challenges. Various studies highlight the difficulties in maintaining consistent stakeholder engagement, overcoming institutional inertia, managing divergent interests, and building trust among actors. Recognizing these challenges is crucial to designing a realistic and implementable model. The Penta-Helix model can be used not only as a descriptive framework but also as a diagnostic and prescriptive tool. Foundational dissertations use the terms PPP, Inter-Governmental Collaboration (IGC), and Multi-Actor Collaboration (MAC) to describe existing collaboration patterns, which are essentially descriptive labels. In contrast, the Penta-Helix model offers a more systematic framework. It can be used to map existing actors into five helices and assess the 'health' of each helix and the relationships between them. Such a diagnosis will likely reveal an overly dominant Government helix, a moderately engaged but largely informal Community helix, and an underdeveloped Academic, Business, and Media helix. These diagnostic findings then directly inform the prescriptive function of the model, where the integrated framework proposed in Section 4 will be specifically designed to strengthen the weaker helices and formalize the relationships between the five.

3.2. Deconstructing Collaboration on the RI-RDTL Border: An Empirical Penta-Helix Analysis

This section applies the Penta-Helix framework as a diagnostic tool to the empirical data presented in the dissertation and supported by other sources.

3.2.1. Government Helix: Overly Dominant Actors

- a. Actors: Central government (BNPP, Ministries/Institutions at PLBN), Provincial Government (East Nusa Tenggara Provincial Government), District Government (Belu District Government), and Security Forces (TNI - Korem 161/WS, Kodim, Border Security Task Force; Polri - East Nusa Tenggara Regional Police, Regional Mobile Brigade Unit).
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- b. Current Roles: Government actors dominate the border management landscape. The National Disaster Management Agency (BNPP) serves as the central coordinating body, with membership spanning various ministries, institutions, and regional heads. The Indonesian National Armed Forces (TNI), specifically Korem 161/WS as the Operational Implementation Command, is responsible for defense and security operations. Meanwhile, regional governments (provincial and district/city) are responsible for administration and public welfare in accordance with regional autonomy laws, such as Law No. 23 of 2014 and Law No. 43 of 2008.
- c. Collaboration Patterns: Collaboration is primarily intergovernmental. Mechanisms such as the Regional Leadership Communication Forum (Forkopimda) and the Regional Intelligence Community (Kominda) exist, but their function is more focused on coordination and intelligence sharing, rather than on creating integrated, joint policies. There is a clear hierarchy, with central ministries/agencies and the Indonesian National Armed Forces (TNI) often dominating regional government actors.
- d. Challenges: The main challenges are pervasive sectoral egos, overlapping authorities, and the lack of a unified command structure for cross-sectoral tasks.¹ Regional government capacity has been identified as a key weakness, limiting their ability to be equal partners. The National Disaster Management Agency (BNPP) itself continues to promote central-regional synergy to accelerate infrastructure development, indicating that this synergy is not yet optimal.

3.2.2. The Entrepreneur Helix: Uncovered Potential Through Partnerships

- a. Actors: Local Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) (e.g. fisheries, agriculture, livestock), larger private investors, and state-owned enterprises.
- b. Current Role: Their role is primarily focused on economic activities such as fish processing in Atapupu, cashew plantations, and cattle and pig farms, most of which are still managed by individuals. Their engagement with the government is often ad hoc or through Public-Private Partnership (PPP) models, which are encouraged but not yet systematically implemented. The Belu Regency Government is seeking to involve them to accelerate development and address regional budget constraints.
- c. Challenges: Local MSMEs face a lack of capital, while attracting large-scale investment remains difficult. A more structured framework is needed for PPPs to move from small projects to strategic infrastructure developments like Atapupu Port, which is considered to have significant potential.

3.2.3. Community Helix: An Untapped Foundation

- a. Actors: Traditional figures, religious figures, youth figures, and the general public.
 - b. Current Role: Their involvement is significant but largely informal. They are crucial for maintaining social harmony (e.g., through the Interfaith Harmony Forum/FKUB), resolving local disputes, and supporting government programs such as the COVID-19 task force. Their cultural authority is recognized as a strong asset. The National Disaster Management Agency (BNPP) also has a program to empower frontier village communities as part of the defense and security system.
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- c. Challenge: Community participation in formal decision-making processes is very limited. They are often viewed as policy objects or partners in implementation, rather than as co-creators of policy. Their role in the Multi-Actor Collaboration (MAC) mentioned in the dissertation is more aspirational than fully realized.

3.2.4. The Helix of Academics and Media: A Latent Catalyst

- a. Actors: Universities (e.g. Universitas Cendana, Universitas Pertahanan), research institutions (e.g. National Research and Innovation Agency), and media (RRI, TVRI, Alliance of Independent Journalists/AJI).
- b. Current Role: The dissertation identifies them as stakeholders, but evidence of their systematic integration is limited. Academics are a potential source of research and capacity building. The media is a channel for information dissemination.
- c. Challenge: Their involvement is peripheral and non-institutionalized. There is no formal platform for academics to regularly incorporate research findings into policy, or for the media to systematically ensure transparency and accountability in border management. This represents a significant gap compared to the theoretical ideals of the Penta-Helix model.

Table 1. Penta-Helix Actor Analysis in RI-RDTL Border Management

Helix	Identified Key Actors	Current Roles and Activities (Evidence)	Identified Gaps and Challenges
Government	BNPP, K/L at PLBN, Korem 161/WS, NTT Provincial Government, Belu Regency Government, East Nusa Tenggara Regional Police, Military District Command, Border Security Task Force	Security operations (TNI), welfare administration (Regional Government), central coordination (BNPP), law enforcement (Polri). Collaboration through the Regional Leadership Coordination Forum and Regional Intelligence Community.	Sectoral ego, overlapping authority, low institutional capacity of local governments, coordination is not integrated yet.
Business Actors	MSMEs (fisheries, agriculture), private investors, regionally-owned enterprises	Local economic development (fish processing, cashew orchards). Engagement through ad-hoc Public-Private Partnerships.	Lack of capital for MSMEs, difficulty in attracting large investments, Public-Private Partnership framework is not structured yet for strategic projects.
Community	Traditional figures, religious figures, youth figures, general public	Informal support for government programs (FKUB, Covid-19 task force), maintaining social harmony, participation in community defense programs.	Informal role, limited voice in policy formulation, more as an object or implementer than a co-creator of policy.
Academics	Universitas Cendana, Universitas Pertahanan, National Research and Innovation Agency	Provider of scientific studies, resource persons, and potential for increasing human resource capacity	Involvement is peripheral, not institutionalized, there is no formal mechanism for integrating research into policy.
Media	RRI, TVRI, AJI	Channels for disseminating information and government programs.	The limited role in disseminating information, monitoring functions and systematic image formation is not optimal yet.

Source: Research Results. Processed Data. 2025.

3.3. New Synthesis: Penta-Helix Based Integrated Border Governance Model (IBGM)

This section presents the main theoretical and practical contributions of this article, by proposing a new model that addresses the weaknesses of existing approaches.

3.3.1. Critique of the Dual Model of Dissertation (CMMBS)

The key finding of the basic dissertation is the Collaboration Management Model on Land Borders System (CMMBS), which is a synergy of two sub-models:

- a. CMMBP (Welfare): with the East Nusa Tenggara Provincial Government as the Center of Gravity.
- b. CMMLBS (Security): with Korem 161/WS as the Center of Gravity.

While this model represents an improvement over the fragmented status quo, the dual-center model is fundamentally flawed. It institutionalizes the very security-prosperity dichotomy it purports to resolve. By creating two separate, albeit coordinating, leadership structures, it risks perpetuating sectoral thinking and competition for resources and authority. It fails to create a truly shared space for integrated decision-making, the hallmark of effective collaborative governance. The use of the term 'Center of Gravity,' derived from military concepts, inherently implies a hierarchical or power-centric view, where one actor dominates a domain.¹ This contradicts the core principles of collaborative governance and the Penta-Helix model, which emphasize power-sharing, consensus-building, and networked relationships, rather than hierarchical command. The goal should not be to identify the 'Center of Gravity,' but rather to create a 'Collaboration Hub,' a neutral, shared platform or institution where all helices can engage as equal partners. The choice of terminology and structure in the dissertation reveals a fundamental tension between the traditional government/military mindset and the collaborative paradigm it seeks to adopt.

3.3.2. Proposed Unified Model: Integrated Border Governance Model (IBGM)

This article proposes a single, unified model, explicitly structured around the Penta-Helix framework. This BGM would be embodied in a formalized 'Border Governance Council' at the regional (provincial or cross-district level).

(1) *Structure and Principles:*

- **Shared Leadership:** The council will not have a single 'Center of Gravity.' Instead, it will be co-chaired, for example, by the Provincial Governor and the Military Resort Command, but with a mandate for consensus-based decision-making.
 - **Formal Membership:** Representatives from all five helices (Government, Business, Community, Academic, Media) will have formally appointed seats on the board. This will transform the status of the community, academic, business, and media from informal partners to formal stakeholders.
 - **Integrated Mandate:** The Council's mandate will be explicitly integrated: to develop and oversee strategies that simultaneously advance security, prosperity, and institutional capacity. The Council will review security plans in terms of their economic impact and development plans in terms of their security implications.
 - **Legal Basis:** This structure needs to be institutionalized through a strong legal instrument, such as a Government Regulation (PP) or Presidential Regulation (Perpres), to empower it over sectoral bodies. This addresses the need for stronger legislation as outlined in the dissertation recommendations.
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Table 2. Comparative Analysis of Border Governance Models

Governance Dimensions	Model A: Current Sectoral Approach	Model B: CMMBS Dissertation (Two Center)	Model C: Proposed IBGM (Integrated Penta-Helix)
Leadership Structure	Fragmented / Silo	Two Centers of Gravity (Provincial Government and Korem)	Joint Council / Co-chaired [New proposal]
Decision-making	Ad-hoc coordination	Coordinated but separate	Consensus-based in one council
The Role of Non-State Actors	Informal / Hierarchical	Recognized as supporters in their respective silo	Formal and equal partners in the integrated council
Core Logic	Sectoral Dominance	Balancing Act	Synergy / Integration
Main Weaknesses	Inefficiency, policy gaps, sectoral egos	Risks reinforcing the security-well-being dichotomy [Analysis]	Requires high political will and capacity for implementation 28

Source: Research Results. Processed Data. 2025.

4. Conclusion

The primary conclusion of this analysis is that the management of the Indonesia-RDTL border is hampered by a structural dichotomy between security and well-being. Existing approaches, based on separate intersectoral coordination, have proven inadequate to address the complexity of the problem. A true solution demands moving beyond simple coordination to a truly integrated governance framework. The Penta-Helix model provides an ideal theoretical and practical foundation for this purpose. The Integrated Border Governance Model (IBGM) proposed in this article operationalizes this theory into a workable structure, proposing a single board that formalizes the equal participation of all five helixes—Government, Business Actors, Communities, Academia, and the Media. Thus, IBGM offers a path to transforming the fragile logic of ‘balance’ into a robust logic of ‘synergy,’ ultimately aiming to achieve national security through human security.

Based on these findings, the following are specific and actionable policy recommendations addressed to key actors within the Penta-Helix framework:

- a. For the Central Government (President, BNPP, Ministry of Home Affairs):
 - Initiate the process of drafting a Government Regulation (PP) to formally establish and empower Border Governance Councils (IBGM) at the regional level in strategic border areas, starting with the RI-RDTL border. This will provide the legal authority necessary to address sectoral egos.
 - Aligning national strategic plans for border areas, such as the roadmap towards Golden Indonesia 2045, with the principles of the Penta-Helix model, ensuring multi-stakeholder participation is a core requirement for program funding and implementation.
- b. For Security Forces (TNI, Polri):
 - Develop operational doctrine and procedures for participation in IBGM, shifting the position from command to collaborative partnership in multi-stakeholder forums.
 - Integrating human security metrics into the evaluation of border security operations, by assessing how they impact local livelihoods and social stability, in line with a soft border policy approach.
- c. For Regional Government (East Nusa Tenggara Provincial Government, Belu Regency Government):
 - Focus on strengthening institutional capacity as a prerequisite for effective collaboration. This includes training for Civil Servants (ASN) in collaborative governance, policy analysis, and partnership management. Initiatives such

as the one in Nunukan Regency to strengthen the capacity of community organizations serve as examples.

- Actively champion the establishment of IBGM and facilitate the inclusion of representatives from business actors, communities, academics, and local media.
- d. For Non-State Actors (Business Actors, Communities, Academics, Media):
Proactively organize and form representative bodies or coalitions that can effectively engage with the government within the IBGM framework. This will ensure their voices are unified and their contributions are strategic, not reactive or sporadic.

This article opens several avenues for future research. First, comparative studies of the implementation of the Penta-Helix model in other Indonesian border regions (for example, with Malaysia in Kalimantan or Papua New Guinea) could provide insights into the model's adaptability in different contexts. Second, quantitative analysis is needed to measure the impact of integrated governance on specific indicators of well-being and security, such as income levels, cross-border crime rates, or the human development index. Third, more in-depth research is needed to explore the challenges of building trust and shared values among diverse stakeholders in a collaborative forum, a challenge identified as crucial yet difficult in implementing collaborative models. Such research would further enrich our understanding of how best to transform borders from dividing lines into bridges of shared prosperity and security.

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