

Research Article

# The Role of Cross-Border Post in East Nusa Tenggara in Combating Human Trafficking

Umbu Riada Tagumara Sabaora <sup>1\*</sup>, Novriest Umbu W Nau <sup>2</sup>, and Indra Wisnu Wibisono <sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Universitas Kristen Satya Wacana, Salatiga, Indonesia; e-mail : [umburiada6@gmail.com](mailto:umburiada6@gmail.com) .

<sup>2</sup> Universitas Kristen Satya Wacana, Salatiga, Indonesia; e-mail : [novriest.umbu@uksw.edu](mailto:novriest.umbu@uksw.edu)

<sup>3</sup> Universitas Kristen Satya Wacana, Salatiga, Indonesia; e-mail : [indra.wibisono@uksw.edu](mailto:indra.wibisono@uksw.edu)

\* Corresponding Author: Umbu Riada Tagumara Sabaora

**Abstract:** Human Trafficking is one of the most complex and organized forms of transnational crime, with the province of East Nusa Tenggara being one of the most vulnerable regions in Indonesia. East Nusa Tenggara geographical location, bordering Timor-Leste and having sea routes to Australia, coupled with high poverty rates and low education quality, makes the province a transit area and primary source of victims of Human Trafficking. This study aims to analyze the effectiveness of State Border Crossing Posts in combating Human Trafficking in East Nusa Tenggara, focusing on three of State Border Crossing Posts : Wini, Motaain, and Motamasin. The method used is a descriptive qualitative approach, with data collection techniques through literature review, government documents, and interviews. The findings indicate that the presence of State Border Crossing Posts has positively contributed to surveillance, awareness-raising, and economic empowerment of border communities. However, its effectiveness is still limited by structural constraints such as insufficient human resources, infrastructure, inter-agency coordination, and difficulties reaching remote areas. Additionally, the role of non-state actors such as NGOs, religious organizations, and local communities has proven to be crucial in detecting, preventing, and assisting victims of human trafficking. This study recommends enhancing cross-sectoral coordination, strengthening institutional capacity, and increasing community involvement in the cross-border protection system more comprehensively.

**Keywords:** East Nusa Tenggara; Human Trafficking; State Border Post.

## 1. Introduction

Human Trafficking is a non-traditional security issue that has become an essential topic of discussion in the international community. Non-traditional security focuses more on subjectivity or individuals and considers that the object of security is not always the state alone, but also the individuals within it. Non-traditional security also pays more attention to humanitarian issues, such as poverty, refugees, terrorism, the environment, and other problems common to all countries. Therefore, collective action is needed between governments as state actors and non-state actors, such as international organizations, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and the community. Human Trafficking, as a non-traditional security issue, is carried out in an organized manner using various methods and executed with great precision through an interconnected network. Human Trafficking can occur in simple forms at the international, national, and even regional levels (Laksono and Purwanti 2019).

Indonesia is one of the countries in Southeast Asia that has been the second largest contributor of labor to the world over the past ten years and has the highest number of Human Trafficking cases, with 1,291 cases from 2019 to 2021 (Khalfani 2023). Indonesia is a source country for Human Trafficking due to its large population, low human resources, high poverty rates, and vast geographical area consisting of many islands surrounded by other countries. The province of East Nusa Tenggara is one of Indonesia's border regions, directly

Received: July 02, 2025

Revised: July 16, 2025

Accepted: July 30, 2025

Online Available: August 01, 2025

Curr. Ver.: August 01, 2025



Copyright: © 2025 by the authors.

Submitted for possible open

access publication under the

terms and conditions of the

Creative Commons Attribution

(CC BY SA) license

([https://creativecommons.org/li](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/)

[censes/by-sa/4.0/](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/))

bordering Timor-Leste and Australia, making it one of the most vulnerable areas for Human Trafficking. This geographical condition has led to the existence of numerous routes commonly used to enter from the Republic of Timor-Leste and Australia or exit Indonesia to other countries, which traffickers then exploit to carry out Human Trafficking activities. Border areas are always considered underdeveloped in various sectors, such as human resources, infrastructure, and the economy. These limitations are barriers preventing the government and people in the region from developing their potential (Koli, Ngepi, and Arman 2023).

As part of the government's efforts to secure border areas, State Border Crossing Posts have been established at several strategic points throughout Indonesia's border areas, including East Nusa Tenggara. State Border Crossing Posts in East Nusa Tenggara have been set up at several locations, such as Motaain, Wini, and Motamasin. State Border Crossing Posts serve as the main gateway for citizens who wish to cross the border legally and as a point of surveillance for illegal activities, including human trafficking, and to improve the welfare of the surrounding community (Bara Lay & Wahyono, 2018). State Border Crossing Posts also impact the development of border areas, such as improving the economy of the border community due to the emergence of community economic enterprises, such as kiosks, shops, and food stalls. The existence of State Border Crossing Posts also impacts the development of other supporting infrastructure, especially road access to the Motaain border area (Bara Lay and Wahyono 2018). However, the effectiveness of State Border Crossing Posts in handling Human Trafficking is still a matter of debate. Several studies indicate that supervision at State Border Crossing Posts still has many weaknesses, such as a limited number of officers, a lack of coordination between relevant agencies (immigration, police, and labor office), and minimal socialization to the community about safe migration procedures (Koli, Ngepi, & Arman, 2023). In addressing human trafficking issues, the role of non-state actors, such as international organizations, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and local communities, is also crucial in helping to address resource shortages.

This study aims to analyze the extent of the effectiveness of State Border Crossing Posts in combating Human Trafficking at the Indonesian border, particularly in East Nusa Tenggara. Using an approach that focuses on inter-agency coordination, policy implementation, and the role of non-state actors in supporting Human Trafficking prevention, this study is expected to provide strategic recommendations for improving the effectiveness of State Border Crossing Posts in reducing human trafficking in border areas. Additionally, this study will identify the main obstacles in implementing human trafficking prevention policies at State Border Crossing Posts and propose solutions to enhance the role of State Border Crossing Posts in addressing these issues more effectively.

## **2. Literature Review**

### **Theoretical Study**

#### **Neoliberalism**

As a result of the scientific revolution of Liberalism, Neoliberalism emerged due to the growing role of international organizations and regional cooperation, which showed that the spirit of global collaboration was growing and developing. This spirit of cooperation led to Neoliberalism, which applies the ideas of Classical Liberalism within the context of international and regional organizations. Thus, Neoliberalism is a theory that introduces a new perspective that emphasizes cooperation between state actors and non-state actors in addressing issues. The figures who popularized Neoliberalism are Robert Keohane and Joseph Nye. These two figures explain the importance of institutions and cooperation in achieving goals by facilitating collaboration, reducing uncertainty, and creating more effective global governance. Neoliberalism also believes cooperation can be achieved even in an anarchic system, provided some mechanisms ensure trust and transparency among actors. Neoliberalism is convinced that cooperation among actors is essential to address the challenges faced (Hadiwinata 2017).

Neoliberal theory focuses on the importance of the role of state and non-state actors in cooperation and overcoming global problems. In this case, neoliberal theory is used to determine how State Border Crossing Posts, as an institution managed by the government, can maintain borders, distribute infrastructure development, and build cooperation between state and non-state actors to overcome human trafficking in East Nusa Tenggara. State actors in this context include State Border Crossing Posts, BNPP, immigration, police, and neighboring governments, while non-state actors include international organizations, NGOs, and the East Nusa Tenggara community. This cooperation can assist State Border Crossing Posts, which lacks resources, in monitoring borders, developing infrastructure, providing victim assistance, and conducting public awareness campaigns. Additionally, this collaboration is expected to strengthen institutional capacity and relations with neighboring countries.

### **Previous Research**

Research on the issue of human trafficking and border posts has been conducted extensively. The first study was published in the journal "Handling Human Trafficking Cases by the Provincial Government of East Nusa Tenggara," which focused on analyzing how the provincial government of East Nusa Tenggara handled human trafficking cases and the obstacles encountered in handling such cases in East Nusa Tenggara. Additionally, studies on State Border Crossing Posts have been conducted in the journal "The Monitoring System of the Motain State Border Crossing Posts on Community Activities to Prevent the Occurrence of human trafficking." This journal focuses on analyzing the monitoring system of the Motain State Border Crossing Posts on community activities to prevent the occurrence of human trafficking.

### **3. Proposed Method**

The author uses qualitative research and an interpretive approach to analyze this study's data. To support this study, the author uses descriptive research, where the study will use theory to analyze the data. Descriptive research describes the phenomena that occur, the subjects, and the actions. The researcher will also examine and process data from observational sources, interviews, and secondary data such as written documents. With these data sources, the descriptive research will be able to analyze the role of the State Border Crossing Post in addressing Human Trafficking in East Nusa Tenggara.

### **4. Results and Discussion**

#### **The situation of Human Trafficking In East Nusa Tenggara**

Human Trafficking is one of the most prevalent criminal activities in East Nusa Tenggara Province, which is also one of the five provinces with the highest rates of human trafficking in Indonesia. Human trafficking is defined as an organized crime with increasing levels of complexity that human traffickers exploit. In the journal Human Trafficking in Nusa Tenggara Timur by Everd Scor Rider Daniel, it is explained that East Nusa Tenggara is an area with the highest rate of human trafficking in Indonesia in 2014. This led the Ministry of Social Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia to consider the issue of migrant workers in East Nusa Tenggara as having reached a chronic condition; resolving this problem is an urgent priority (Daniel, Mulyana, and Wibhawa 2017).

The development of Human Trafficking from 2020 to 2024 has seen an increase and decrease in Human Trafficking figures, as can be seen from the available data. According to the data, there was an increase in Human Trafficking figures in 2019 from 191 cases to 382 cases in 2020. This number then nearly doubled, reaching 624 cases in 2021. The rise in Human Trafficking cases was attributed to the COVID-19 pandemic, which hindered efforts to identify, prevent, and eradicate human trafficking, as most law enforcement funds and resources were redirected to address the pandemic. Additionally, the moratorium or suspension of the dispatch of Indonesian migrant workers led prospective migrant workers to opt for non-procedural channels, driven by economic hardships that compelled them to seek work abroad (Wetlin et al. 2025). In 2022, the number of Human Trafficking cases decreased

to 98; in 2023, there were 85 cases, which further reduced to 60 cases in 2024. The majority of Human Trafficking victims are non-procedural migrant workers, with only 120 out of 2,689 migrant worker issues following the proper procedures. These figures indicate that only 4.46 percent of East Nusa Tenggara migrant workers are legal, with the remainder being illegal workers. With these numbers, East Nusa Tenggara province has the highest rate of migrant workers who have become victims of violence, including fatalities.

### **Causes of Human Trafficking in East Nusa Tenggara**

According to previous studies on the causes of Human Trafficking in East Nusa Tenggara, there are three main factors: low economic conditions, poor quality of education, limited job opportunities, and geographical conditions of the archipelago. One of the previous researchers, Penny Naluria Utami, in her paper entitled "Handling Cases of Trafficking in Persons by the Provincial Government of East Nusa Tenggara," also explained that the root cause of Human Trafficking in East Nusa Tenggara is the high poverty rate and lack of job opportunities, which cause people to choose to work abroad. The demand for low-wage labor abroad and the success stories of their relatives working overseas are also significant attractions. The explanations and data presented above are consistent with the findings.

#### **a. Low Economic Conditions**

The main problem faced by the people of East Nusa Tenggara is the weak economic condition of the community. East Nusa Tenggara is one of the provinces with the highest poverty rates in Indonesia. This has contributed to the occurrence of crimes such as domestic violence, sexual violence, and human trafficking. According to data from the Central Statistics Agency in 2023, East Nusa Tenggara economic growth ranked third lowest in Indonesia at 3.52%. The districts with the highest poverty rates are Central Sumba at 31.78%, followed by Sabu Raijua at 28.37%, East Sumba at 27.17%, Southwest Sumba at 27.48%, and West Sumba at 27.17%. Meanwhile, Kupang City has the lowest poverty rate at 8.61%, followed by East Flores Regency at 11.77% and Ngada at 12.06% (Elisabeth Ngole Bunga, 2024). The data above shows an economic disparity between urban areas and remote, underdeveloped regions. Therefore, it can be concluded that low economic conditions among the population may be the primary cause of human trafficking cases in East Nusa Tenggara.

#### **b. Low Quality of Education**

Education is also a factor contributing to Human Trafficking in East Nusa Tenggara. East Nusa Tenggara is the province with the lowest quality of education in Indonesia. This is influenced by suboptimal school participation across all levels of education and the relatively poor quality of the infrastructure. According to 2022 education statistics, preschool participation in East Nusa Tenggara has not yet reached the government's target, and higher education participation remains far below that of other provinces. Based on the National Socio-Economic Survey (SUSENAS) results, East Nusa Tenggara is among the ten regions with the lowest education scores nationally. This low level of education is concentrated on the island of Sumba, particularly in Central Sumba, Southwest Sumba, and West Sumba districts, followed by Sabu Raijua, South Central Timor, Sikka, and Malaka districts (BPS, 2022). The poor quality of education in East Nusa Tenggara limits employment opportunities and reduces awareness of the dangers of human trafficking, making the population more vulnerable to becoming victims of human trafficking.

#### **c. Limited Job Opportunities**

Limited job opportunities amid many people in need have led many to seek employment abroad. Low labor absorption in East Nusa Tenggara Province has had a significant impact on human trafficking. The relatively low quality of the workforce is evident from data showing that out of a total of 2,725,955 workers, 1,394,070 have an elementary school education level or below, and 377,449 workers have a secondary education (junior high school). The next group comprises workers with a high school or higher education level, totaling 954,346 people. From this data, workers with an

elementary school education level or below dominate the workforce in East Nusa Tenggara. The next issue is low wages or salaries, as evidenced by the high number of workers earning below the Provincial Minimum Wage. The third issue is the high sectoral inequality in the labor force, which can be seen in job quality, wages, and opportunities across various sectors, where formal sector workers are more prosperous than informal sector workers. This inequality is particularly pronounced between informal sector workers, such as farmers and fishermen, and formal sector workers (Holivil, 2024). This region's high unemployment rate and labor market disparities have driven people to take any job available to meet their basic needs. One such option is working as a migrant worker.

d. **Geographical Conditions**

The archipelagic geography and direct border with the Republic of Timor-Leste and Australia also contribute to East Nusa Tenggara becoming a hotspot for Human Trafficking. According to Reynaldi Koli and colleagues in their research, borders are transit hubs and trade destinations in Indonesia, prone to illegal cross-border activities. East Nusa Tenggara Province is a border region because it has three districts and 11 sub-districts that directly border the territory of Timor-Leste, leading to the continued occurrence of illegal activities in this area. One of the unlawful activities occurring is human trafficking. Victims of human trafficking in border areas are often exploited as sex workers, domestic workers, migrant workers, or arranged brides (Koli, Ngepi, and Arman 2023). The geographical conditions create numerous routes commonly used for entering from the Republic of Timor-Leste and Australia or exiting Indonesia to other countries. Traffickers exploit the availability of these routes to carry out human trafficking. This situation is exacerbated by weak surveillance systems and the high number of informal routes that can be used to smuggle illegal workers abroad (Bait et al, 2024).

**Profile of the State Border Crossing Post in East Nusa Tenggara**

This study focuses on three of State Border Crossing Posts located in the border region of East Nusa Tenggara that have been operating since 2015, namely:

a. **Wini Border Post (North Central Timor Regency)**

The Wini Border Crossing Post is one of the posts located in East Nusa Tenggara. This post is in the western sector, specifically the Insana Utara sub-district, Timor Tengah Utara (TTU) regency. This Border Crossing Post directly borders the Oecusse exclave, part of RD/TL, spanning 15.2 km and 114.9 km. There are five entry points into the Oecusse region, starting from the origin point to Oelbinose, then to Manusia, Haumeni Ana, Napan, and ending at Wini. The geographical conditions in North Central Timor Regency consist of steep mountains and hills and inadequate transportation infrastructure, such as damaged and potholed roads. Lack of supervision by officials is also one of the causes of the high incidence of smuggling of goods and petroleum products (BBM) from the Wini checkpoint. The Wini of State Border Crossing Posts occupies an area of 1,770 square meters, but the CIQ (Customs, Immigration, and Quarantine) is located separately outside the of State Border Crossing Posts area. The distance from the Wini of State Border Crossing Posts to Kefa, the capital of the TTU District, is approximately 48.1 kilometers.

b. **Motaain Border Post (Belu Regency)**

The Motaain State Border Crossing Post is located in the eastern sector, specifically in Belu Regency. This post directly borders the Main Boundary with RD/TL along a 126 km stretch and has two main entry points with high levels of goods and people mobility, namely Motaain and Turiskain. The Motaain State Border Crossing Post spans an area of 8.3 hectares, which is also used as a tourist site. The distance from the Motaain Border Crossing Point to Atambua, the capital of Belu Regency, is approximately 17 kilometers. This border crossing point is the busiest in both inbound and outbound traffic in East Nusa Tenggara. Additionally, the Motaain Border Crossing Point plays a crucial role in boosting the local economy of Belu by serving as a tourist

destination. The Motaain BCP is a highly vulnerable area for illegal activities, as the surrounding area is riddled with unlawful routes or “jalantikus.” The price difference in basic food commodities between Indonesia and Timor-Leste is one of the main factors contributing to the high incidence of smuggling.

c. Motamasin Border Post (Malaka Regency)

The Motamasin State Border Crossing Post is in Malaka District, Kobalima Subdistrict, Alas Selatan Village. This post was built on an area of 11.2 hectares. The distance from this post to Betun is approximately 26.6 km. The Motamasin State Border Crossing Post has also been developed into a tourist attraction, which has become one of the driving forces for the local economy around the post, with the opening of kiosks, canteens, and restaurants. However, the Motamasin State Border Crossing Post still faces several challenges, including poor road access, inadequate internet connectivity, and insufficient electricity supply. These challenges were highlighted as obstacles to operational processes at the border post by the Border Post Coordinator during the visit of East Nusa Tenggara Governor Melky Lakalena to Motamasin. Upon hearing these challenges, the Governor of East Nusa Tenggara pledged to improve all infrastructure at the Motamasin of State Border Crossing Posts and throughout the border regions of East Nusa Tenggara to ensure that services at the Motamasin of State Border Crossing Posts operate smoothly, national sovereignty in border areas is maintained, and international relations with Timor-Leste remain strong.

### **The Role of State Border Crossing Posts in East Nusa Tenggara in Overcoming Human Trafficking**

To address existing issues at the border and implement Article 18(1) of Law No. 43 of 2008 on Border Areas, the BNPP was established as a government-managed business entity. The BNPP is responsible for the development and management of national borders to create safe, orderly, and prosperous border areas that serve as centers of economic growth and ensure the welfare of the community, as stipulated in Presidential Regulation (Perpres) No. 12 of 2010 on the National Border Management Agency. To carry out these functions, the Border Post was established as a working unit of the BNPP tasked with coordinating and facilitating the implementation of border surveillance functions and actively controlling the movement of people and goods, as stipulated in the Law No. 43 of 2008 on the national territory, which specifies that entry and exit points must be equipped with immigration, customs, quarantine, and security facilities and infrastructure. The purpose of State Border Crossing Posts is also to make border areas true gateways for economic and trade activities with neighboring countries, which can positively impact community welfare. These tasks are outlined in Presidential Regulation No. 43 of 2019 on the Development and Management of State Border Crossing Posts, which stipulates that, in addition to serving as a cross-border service center, State Border Crossing Posts also functions as an economic growth hub for border areas.

About the task of addressing Human Trafficking issues, State Border Crossing Posts performs the function of detecting and preventing the movement of people who are potentially victims of human trafficking. This task is stipulated in Law No. 6 of 2011 on immigration, which stipulates that Immigration Checkpoints (TPI), including of State Border Crossing Posts, must inspect every person entering or leaving Indonesian territory. These inspections serve as the initial step to identify acts of exploitation or human trafficking. As an agency established by the President and led by a head appointed by the President, who is accountable to the President through the Minister, the BNPP and of State Border Crossing Posts also have the responsibility to protect Indonesian migrant workers by Article 46 of Law No. 18 of 2017 on the Protection of Indonesian Migrant Workers.

The province of East Nusa Tenggara itself has had three of State Border Crossing Posts since 2015, spread across several districts, namely of State Border Crossing Posts Wini, of State Border Crossing Posts Motaain, and of State Border Crossing Posts Motamasin. These three of State Border Crossing Posts were established to boost the local economy and reduce illegal smuggling and entry. The three of State Border Crossing Posts are the outermost regions or border areas with neighboring countries. of State Border Crossing Posts are tasked with

detecting, preventing, and reporting indications of human trafficking within their respective areas of operation. State Border Crossing Posts Wini, constructed in 2015 on the Indonesia-East Timor border, has consolidated all cross-border service units such as Immigration, Customs, and Quarantine (CIQ) under one roof, streamlining travel procedures. However, when the volume of travelers increases, services become slow due to the limited number of staff. Supporting facilities are also not yet fully available. Overall, the quality of services is considered good, particularly in terms of collecting PNPB fees by regulations and the friendly attitude of staff, which travelers appreciate. Travelers also feel comfortable with the physical condition of the of State Border Crossing Posts. However, responsiveness remains low because staff do not fully understand the community's needs. Despite this, accountability and responsibility are rated as good, with consistent implementation of administrative management and standard operating procedures (SOPs). Another challenge is the lack of an information system facilitating public access to cross-border service information (Tefa and Thaal, 2019).

The Wini Border Post faces many illegal border issues, particularly in cases of goods smuggling. In cases of human smuggling, there have been no reports of traffickers bringing victims of trafficking in persons through the Wini Border Post. Most Human Trafficking activities occur around the State Border Crossing Posts Wini operational area, particularly in North Central Timor Regency (TTU), where victims are not transported through the East Nusa Tenggara border area but instead taken to Kalimantan and smuggled abroad, such as to Malaysia. However, the State Border Crossing Posts continues to conduct surveillance and outreach to villages to raise awareness about the dangers, ways to address the issue, and the modus operandi commonly used by Human Trafficking perpetrators. According to Mr. AIPDA Benjamin Kiak, despite the of State Border Crossing Posts outreach and surveillance efforts, they have not yet reached all remote areas in East Nusa Tenggara, necessitating assistance from other government agencies, NGOs, and community organizations to address the Human Trafficking issue. The State Border Crossing Posts in Wini has also established new economic centers with the growth of micro-enterprises such as food stalls, homestays, and transportation services, as well as skill-training programs facilitated by the of State Border Crossing Poststo enhance the local workforce's capabilities.

Next, the Motaain of State Border Crossing Postswas established, improving the community's economy, facilitating cross-border activities, and reducing illegal routes to reduce unlawful smuggling, illegal entry, and human trafficking. The Motaain area was previously a route for smuggling illicit goods from Indonesia to Timor-Leste due to the lack of supervision by the authorities. Following the establishment of the Motaain of State Border Crossing Posts, economic and migration activities in the area began to improve. Financial activities, such as shops and stalls, emerged, creating job opportunities and stabilizing per capita income. Migration activities were also enhanced due to the implementation of standard operating procedures (SOPs) for crossing the border and surveillance of routes that had the potential to become illegal routes, as evidenced by a decrease in smuggling and unlawful entry. Although illegal activities still occur, it is evident that the Motaain Border Post has successfully fulfilled its role in enhancing the local economy, improving infrastructure, and reducing economic disparities—a key factor contributing to illegal border activities in border areas (Rokhanyah et al., 2023). Therefore, indirectly, the Motaain Border Post has successfully monitored community activities crossing the border area and prevented the occurrence of human trafficking and illegal smuggling.

The Motaain Border Post supports the local economy by establishing the Motaain Border Post Market. This market has become one of the most popular in the border area, with 27 vendors selling various household items and necessities. The market makes it easier for residents to access essential goods and benefits the vendors, who earn an average monthly income of 10.9 million rupiah. Additionally, the Motaain market features a food court area that expands business opportunities, with eight vendors selling food and beverages, averaging 6.3 million rupiah in monthly income. This market attracts buyers from the Motaain area and many customers from Timor-Leste. This is possible due to a policy implemented by the Motaain Border Post allowing residents of Timor Leste to enter without a passport, though only within the market area. This policy is enforced with surveillance and data collection by of

State Border Crossing Posts Motaain staff, who also facilitate currency exchange services. According to the data collected, approximately 655 Batugade, Timor Leste visitors visit the market weekly.

The next of State Border Crossing Posts is Motamasin, which also creates a better environment for the community and strives to improve the welfare of the people in the Motamasin border area. To achieve this, the State Border Crossing Posts actively participates in helping to empower the community by implementing environmental changes in the border area. One of the ways to do this is by collaborating with the community to clean up unused farmland. State Border Crossing Posts Motamasin also provides cooperative training to the community in its area. This activity is conducted because the majority of the population in the region is informal sector workers. These activities provide an understanding of forming a cooperative's role, functions, and benefits. With this understanding, the community's welfare in the Motamasin of State Border Crossing Posts area is hoped to improve. Additionally, the Motamasin of State Border Crossing Posts conducts awareness campaigns about simple money management methods for small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in the community. The activities aim to provide financial planning knowledge to the community facing economic difficulties in the border area. By raising financial literacy through explanations about money knowledge, skills, and beliefs, the community can make better decisions and manage their finances. This understanding will help them manage their finances well and achieve a better life in the border area.

The Motamasin Border Post also educates the nation by creating a Digital Reading Corner (POCADI). Pocadi helps children in nearby villages read books and spend their free time after school. Thus, Pocadi has become a place for children at the Border Post to grow (BNPP, 2025). In addition, the Motamasin Border Post also helps people who have difficulty accessing clean water. The El Niño drought causes difficulty in accessing clean water, a natural phenomenon related to warming the Earth's surface temperature in the Pacific Ocean, which reduces rainfall and leads to drought. This drought makes it difficult for the community to access clean water, forcing them to walk several kilometers to obtain water. To assist the community, the Motamasin Border Post distributes water to several areas, such as the Kobalima Timur sub-district. Water distribution is carried out using water tank trucks with a capacity of 18,000 liters per week. This assistance significantly reduces the economic burden on the community.

In addition to the direct impact on Human Trafficking, several indirect impacts are generated by State Border Crossing Posts in East Nusa Tenggara Province. First, trade costs have become cheaper with the implementation of strict and precise SOPs for crossing through State Border Crossing Posts. Next, there has been an increase in trade intensity due to the implementation of Pas Lintas Batas (PLB) and Kartu Identitas Batas (KILB), which exempt imports from customs duties. Economic growth has also increased due to the emergence of various community-based economic activities, such as kiosks, shops, and warungs. The presence of State Border Crossing Posts has also impacted the development of supporting infrastructure, particularly road access to the Motaain border area. The realization of good connectivity and accessibility has led to better border area development. Infrastructure development in the border area can also support all cross-border activities and trade.

### **Obstacles and Challenges**

Many challenges and problems are faced when handling or resolving Human Trafficking issues. These challenges have resulted in the actions taken by State Border Crossing Posts to address Human Trafficking issues in East Nusa Tenggara being ineffective. The first obstacle is the vast and archipelagic nature of the East Nusa Tenggara province. This has led the State Border Crossing Posts officers and other agencies to conduct outreach and monitoring activities. The limited personnel and funds further complicate the problem, as covering the five major islands in East Nusa Tenggara requires many personnel and significant costs. A single visit to another island, such as Alur, Sumba, and Sabu, alone would incur substantial expenses. The problem is further exacerbated by the location of infrastructure and offices, with nearly all of State Border Crossing Posts and immigration offices situated on Timor Island. All of the State Border Crossing Posts offices are in Timor, and three of the



immigration offices are also there. As a result, officers cannot conduct regular monitoring and outreach activities and must wait for substantial funding to do so.

The next obstacle is that not all human trafficking syndicates can be prosecuted effectively, as the government still faces many challenges. One of the challenges faced by the government is that many victims of human trafficking for sexual exploitation consider it a shameful secret that should not be known to many people. Additionally, victims lack knowledge about reporting the cases they have experienced, and their economic circumstances do not support the costs associated with the legal process. Many perpetrators are located abroad, making them difficult to detect, which is another significant obstacle (Apriana M. Bouk, Rudepel Petrus Leo, 2023).

Another factor contributing to the prevalence of illegal activities in the East Nusa Tenggara border area is the close cultural ties between communities living along the border between Indonesia and Timor-Leste. Both communities are known to originate from the same socio-cultural group, namely the Tetun, Kemak, and Mara tribes. These similarities have led them to adopt the same norms, values, and customs as family and community life guidelines. The two groups have also established economic ties, such as trade, for a long time. However, these ties began to be restricted after Timor-Leste separated from Indonesia, and various regulations were implemented to regulate the movement of people between the two countries. Despite establishing borders and regulations, many people remain unaware that the two communities are citizens of two countries with distinct bureaucratic and legal systems. This has led them to view still crossing the border between the two countries as necessary (Koli, Ngepi, and Arman 2023).

In addition to the non-technical obstacles mentioned above, of State Border Crossing Posts officials in East Nusa Tenggara often face technical obstacles. The first obstacle is the issue of electricity access, where the electricity supply is limited and power outages occur frequently. This hinders the performance of State Border Crossing Post officials and can also damage electronic devices, which in turn can disrupt cross-border activities.

### **The role of non-state actors in helping to address Human Trafficking issues**

Looking at the discussion on the effectiveness of State Border Crossing Posts in addressing Human Trafficking, which is difficult to overcome on its own, the state's role alone will not be sufficient to tackle transnational organized crimes such as human trafficking strategically. Assistance from other actors is therefore needed. One such actor is a non-state actor, such as a non-governmental organization (NGO). Due to their more flexible operational nature, these actors are crucial in assisting government efforts, particularly in outreach to rural areas. Integrating CSOs into a collaborative framework aims to support the adoption and implementation of policies, enhance the capacity of public institutions and civil society to collaborate, strengthen anti-human trafficking coalitions, and counter all forms of human trafficking in various guises.

One NGO addressing Human Trafficking is the International Organization for Migration (IOM), which has an essential role in helping to address Human Trafficking in East Nusa Tenggara. As an international NGO, IOM has provided capacity-building assistance to law enforcement agencies and relevant stakeholders in the form of medical support, logistics, health services, awareness-raising programs, legal counseling for victims, educational assistance to the community, shelter for victims experiencing trauma symptoms, and repatriation assistance for victims to their places of origin. IOM has also collaborated with the East Nusa Tenggara Provincial Government by providing various trainings and technical assistance, conducting seminars, and facilitating the mobilization of the Human Trafficking Task Force. IOM is recognized as one of the NGOs that had a significant positive impact due to the assistance provided. However, IOM also faces challenges, including insufficient coordination with relevant agencies and inadequate funding (PAMUJI 2023).

IOM is also actively engaged in prevention and training activities related to human trafficking and labor migration through awareness-raising campaigns on the dangers of human trafficking and procedures for placing workers both domestically and internationally. These activities have directly educated 5,000 people about the risks of human trafficking and utilized 5,000 posters and billboards. Additionally, they have trained prospective migrant workers on

procedural aspects of labor placement on 60 occasions and procedural elements of migration on 30 occasions. In addition to these awareness-raising activities, IOM has developed Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for monitoring the recruitment and placement of migrant workers, established migrant worker support groups in 24 districts as complaint centers and information hubs regarding the dangers of human trafficking.

In addition, there is Rumah Perempuan Kupang, a local NGO. Rumah Perempuan Kupang is active in raising awareness and providing assistance to victims of human trafficking. The organization provides temporary shelter for victims of human trafficking and offers rehabilitation for physical and psychological recovery, as well as access to health services. Not only that, but victims are also provided with training to improve their skills and gain access to employment to become economically independent. The Kupang Women's Shelter also conducts awareness campaigns and education about the dangers of human trafficking and how to avoid it, targeting the general public, particularly vulnerable groups such as women and children. Legal assistance is also provided to victims seeking strict enforcement of the law against perpetrators.

Not only NGOs but also religious organizations play a role in assisting. Religious organizations such as churches are highly respected and listened to by the people of East Nusa Tenggara, who are very spiritual and value their culture. Religious organizations contribute by regularly educating their congregations about the dangers of Human Trafficking through sermons and community activities. This role is particularly evident in areas vulnerable to Human Trafficking, such as Belu, Malaka, North Central Timor, and Sumba. Additionally, through an interview with a pastor from the GKS synod, it was revealed that the GKS is highly concerned about this issue and has made it a priority in their annual work plan to prevent human trafficking. Various committees then implement the approved program. Additionally, education about human trafficking is consistently conveyed through sermons, socialization, and child protection campaigns organized by the Child Development Center within the church. The church has also collaborated with the Regional Police Department to provide support and care for victims of human trafficking who are members of the church congregation.

### **Cross-Sectoral Cooperation in Handling Human Trafficking**

Based on the explanation above, the State Border Crossing Posts has made many efforts to overcome the problem of Human Trafficking in East Nusa Tenggara. These efforts range from surveillance at the border gates, conducting socialization, and making arrests. However, these efforts are insufficient to overcome this problem, as the number of Human Trafficking cases in East Nusa Tenggara remains high until 2024. Therefore, as explained by neoliberal theory, multi-stakeholder cooperation is needed with other agencies and non-state organizations. Neoliberalism believes that cooperation between states alone is insufficient to address transnational issues, so collaboration between state and non-state actors is also needed to address various global issues. This stakeholder collaboration is expected to reduce uncertainty and create more effective global governance. This aligns with David Held's concept of "governance without government," which explains that addressing global issues is not solely the responsibility of governments and states but should be done collaboratively by various formal and informal entities.

In addressing Human Trafficking, non-state actors such as international organizations, NGOs, churches, and communities are essential. As explained in the previous subsection, NGOs such as the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the Kupang Women's Shelter play a significant role in raising awareness about the dangers of Human Trafficking, providing rehabilitation assistance, and offering legal protection. Although these are also actions frequently undertaken by the government, the operational framework often requires waiting for instructions from the central government. It faces inadequate funding, making it difficult to reach remote areas. Therefore, collaboration with non-state actors is necessary.

The State Border Crossing Posts, as a state actor, has collaborated with non-state actors, such as the non-governmental organization Yayasan Rumah Harapan Indonesia and the International Organization for Migration (IOM). This collaboration includes providing information about the dangers of human trafficking to vulnerable communities and assisting

victims, including trauma recovery and social reintegration. The efforts made by the IOM through its reintegration program have successfully helped around 150 victims of human trafficking. The social and economic reintegration program provides entrepreneurship training, agriculture, and handicraft skills to reduce dependence on risky migration. They also monitor victims to ensure they do not become targets of human trafficking networks again. The actions taken by IOM have reduced the number of victims being trafficked again, although the overall human trafficking rate in East Nusa Tenggara remains high.

NGOs and religious organizations have their strengths and weaknesses. IOM, as an international NGO, has a greater global capacity to address issues of legal migration and human trafficking. On the other hand, the Kupang Women's Shelter Foundation, a local NGO, does not have an extensive network but is closer to the local community, enabling it to conduct safer migration counseling, Human Trafficking awareness campaigns, and victim assistance. Religious organizations, on the other hand, focus on educating their congregations about human trafficking through church activities such as sermons and committee meetings. In this way, each actor can work according to their respective strengths.

It can be seen that state actors alone, such as State Border Crossing Posts, are not sufficient to address human trafficking, as evidenced by the fact that this phenomenon is still frequently encountered as of 2024. Therefore, cooperation with non-state actors contributing in their own ways is essential. Additionally, the role of non-state actors such as NGOs and religious organizations can cover areas lacking oversight from State Border Crossing Posts and Immigration, such as the islands of Alor, Sumba, and Sabu. These three islands do not have border checkpoints or immigration offices, so the presence of state actors operating in these areas can assist in monitoring and prevention. However, this does not rule out the possibility of establishing immigration offices or border posts, as these institutions are also greatly needed in these areas.

## 5. Conclusion

Based on the results of the research conducted, it can be concluded that the existence of the State Border Crossing Posts in East Nusa Tenggara Province has made a significant contribution in combating human trafficking, both directly through the inspection and monitoring of the movement of people, and indirectly through economic development, infrastructure improvement, and increased awareness among border communities. The State Border Crossing Posts in Motaain, Wini, and Motamasin have demonstrated satisfactory performance in curbing illegal routes, despite facing challenges such as limited human resources, infrastructure, electricity, and suboptimal inter-agency coordination. Additionally, the involvement of non-state actors such as NGOs, religious organizations, and traditional communities has proven to be highly effective in educating the public, providing support to victims, and facilitating the reporting of human trafficking cases. However, significant challenges remain regarding program reach across all areas of East Nusa Tenggara and the lack of an integrated reporting system. State Border Crossing Posts has a strong legal basis to carry out its duties of monitoring and protecting migrant workers. However, the effectiveness of policy implementation still requires technical support, stronger horizontal coordination, and integration with non-state actors' programs. Therefore, a more structured collaborative strategy between the central government, local governments, and civil society is needed so that of State Border Crossing Post can become an effective tool in preventing and addressing Human Trafficking in border areas.

This study has several limitations, including its geographical scope, which is limited to three State Border Crossing Posts on Timor Island and therefore does not cover other areas prone to Human Trafficking, such as Sumba or Alor; the predominant use of secondary data, which may lead to underreporting of cases; and the absence of direct perspectives from victims and perpetrators of Human Trafficking. Nevertheless, these findings provide an essential foundation for further comprehensive research, including expanding the geographical scope, adopting a mixed-methods approach, and involving victims anonymously, while also recommending the strengthening of multistakeholder collaboration systems to enhance the effectiveness of State Border Crossing Posts in addressing Human Trafficking in border areas.

## References

- [1] [Angelie, Angelie, and Slamet Tri Wahyudi. 2023. "Uang Sirih Pinang Sebagai Modus Operandi Perdagangan Orang Terhadap Anak." *Jurnal Ius Constituendum* 8(3):377. doi: <https://doi.org/10.26623/jic.v8i3.6976>.
- [2] Anon. 2023. "Data Terbaru: Sumba Tengah Jadi Daerah Termiskin Di Provinsi Nusa Tenggara Timur." 2–4.
- [3] Apriana M. Bouk, Rudepel Petrus Leo, Darius Antonius Kianu. 2023. "MODUS OPERANDI, UPAYA PENANGGULANGAN SERTA HAMBATAN TINDAK PIDANA PERDAGANGAN ORANG KHUSUSNYA ANAK DI WILAYAH HUKUM KEPOLISIAN DAERAH NUSA TENGGARA TIMUR." *Detikproperti* 4(8):1365–78. doi: <https://doi.org/10.46799/jsa.v4i7.671>.
- [4] Badan Pusat Statistika (BPS). 2022. "Statistik Pendidikan Provinsi NTT 2022/ Education Statistics of NTT Province 2022 |." Badan Pusat Statistika NTT.
- [5] Bait, Intan Yuningsi Puspitasari, Arinda Diah Nur Mustika, Ari Wibowo, Imam Denis Ferdiyansyah, Ahmad Krisdiyanto, Stepanus Nawipa, Ketrina Novika Wangge, Jefrianus Tamo Ama, and Syukron Abdul Kadir. 2024. "Minimal Socialization to the Community Regarding Legal Requirements for Working Abroad Causes an Increase in Human Trafficking of Workers from East Nusa Tenggara." *Journal of Legal and Cultural Analytics* 3(1):1–16. doi: <https://doi.org/10.55927/jlca.v3i1.7817>.
- [6] Bara Lay, John Ronald Benyamin, and Hadi Wahyono. 2018. "Dampak Pengembangan Pos Lintas Batas Negara (PLBN) Motaain Pada Kawasan Perbatasan RI-RDTL Di Kabupaten Belu Provinsi Nusa Tenggara Timur." *Jurnal Pembangunan Wilayah & Kota* 14(1):29. doi: <https://doi.org/10.14710/interaksi.v25i.103-116>.
- [7] BNPP. (2024, 10 24). Hari Pasar di PLBN Motaain, Pedagang Indonesia Terus Raup Rupiah dari Pelancong Timor Leste. Badan Nasional Pengelola Perbatasan Republik Indonesia (BNPP RI). Retrieved 07 06, 2025, from <https://bnpp.go.id/berita/hari-pasar-di-plbn-motaain-pedagang-indonesia-terus-raup-rupiah-dari-pelancong-timor-leste>
- [8] BNPP. (2025, 04 16). Pasar PLBN Motaain Semakin Bergeliat, Jadi Magnet Ekonomi Warga Perbatasan. Badan Nasional Pengelola Perbatasan Republik Indonesia (BNPP RI). Retrieved 07 06, 2025, from <https://bnpp.go.id/berita/pasar-plbn-motaain-semakin-bergeliat-jadi-magnet-ekonomi-warga-perbatasan>
- [9] BNPP. (2025, 06 05). Dari Perbatasan untuk Masa Depan: Pocadi Motamasin Jadi Jendela Dunia bagi Anak-anak. Badan Nasional Pengelola Perbatasan Republik Indonesia (BNPP RI). Retrieved 07 05, 2025, from <https://bnpp.go.id/berita/dari-perbatasan-untuk-masa-depan-pocadi-motamasin-jadi-jendela-dunia-bagi-anakanak>
- [10] Daniel, Everd Scor Rider, Nandang Mulyana, and Budhi Wibhawa. 2017. "Human Trafficking Di Nusa Tenggara Timur." *Share : Social Work Journal* 7(1):21. doi: <https://doi.org/10.24198/share.v7i1.13808>.
- [11] Elisabeth Ngole Bunga, Tri Haryanto. 2024. "KEMISKINAN DI PROVINSI NUSA TENGGARA TIMUR TAHUN 2015-2023 JIMEA | Jurnal Ilmiah MEA ( Manajemen , Ekonomi , Dan Akuntansi )." (2001):3016–31. doi: DOI: 10.31955/mea.v8i3.4834.
- [12] Eryansan, B. F. J., V. Falo, S. D. Rade, Y. Arman, and ... 2023. "Sosialisasi Pemberantasan Tindak Pidana Perdagangan Orang Di Desa Silawan Sebagai Tindakan Pencegahan Terhadap Maraknya Perdagangan Orang Di Wilayah NTT." *Journal Of Human And ...* 3(2):600–606. doi: <https://doi.org/10.31004/jh.v3i2.297>.
- [13] Holivil, Ernestus. 2024. "Ketimpangan Ketenagakerjaan Dan Dinamika Kemiskinan Di NTT : Analisis Faktor Penyebab Dan Implikasi Kebijakan Employment Inequality and Poverty Dynamics in NTT : An Analysis of Causal Factors and Policy Implications." *XX*(2):203–26. doi: <https://doi.org/10.52316/jap.v20i2.374>.
- [14] Khalfani, Adara. 2023. "Tindak Pidana Perdagangan Orang Studi Kasus Di NTT." *Nusantara: Jurnal Pendidikan, Seni, Sains Dan Sosial Humanioral* 1–14.
- [15] Kiwang, A S, and F M Arif. 2023. "Kebijakan Pemerintah Provinsi Nusa Tenggara Timur Dalam Penanganan Dan Pelindungan Pekerja Migran Indonesia Asal Nusa Tenggara Timur." *Jurnal Kewarganegaraan* 7(2): 1846–55. <http://journal.upy.ac.id/index.php/pkn/article/view/5496%0Ahttps://journal.upy.ac.id/index.php/pkn/article/download/5496/3252>.
- [16] Kokomakingi, Honorius Kia, Tanti Nurgiyanti, Bagus Subekti Nuswantoro, and Yeyen Subandi. 2024. "Upaya Dinas Tenaga Kerja Dan Transmigrasi Kabupaten Timor Tengah Utara Bersama International Organization For Migration ( Iom ) Dalam Menangani Kasus Trafficking In Person Tahun 2018-2022 ." 4:9439–50. doi: <https://doi.org/10.31004/innovative.v4i5.15876>.
- [17] Koli, Alexander Reynaldi, Florensiana Resi Ngepi, and Yohanes Arman. 2023. "Sistem Pengawasan PLBN Motain Terhadap Aktivitas Masyarakat Dalam Mencegah Terjadinya TPPO." *Madani:Jurnal Ilmiah Multidisipline* 1(6):758–67. doi: <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.8149031>.
- [18] Laksono, Tunggal Bayu, and Maidah Purwanti. 2019. "Government Institution Collaboration In Efforts To Handling Criminal Acts Of Human Trafficking In Indonesia Case Study: Literature Study For The Area Of East Nusa Tenggara Province." *Journal of Law and Border Protection* 1(2):127–38. doi: <https://doi.org/10.52617/jlbp.v1i2.178>.
- [19] Paksi, Arie Kusuma, and Amalia Nurul Hutami. 2023. "Counter-Human Trafficking in East Nusa Tenggara: The Urgency of Strengthening NGOs Role through Multilevel Collaborative Governance." *Jurnal Ilmiah Hubungan Internasional* 19(1):25–38. doi: <https://doi.org/10.26593/jihi.v19i1.5773.25-38>.
- [20] PAMUJI, MUHAMMAD ABDUL AZIS. 2023. "PERAN INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION FOR MIGRATION (IOM) DALAM MENANGGULANGI PERDAGANGAN MANUSIA DI NUSA TENGGARA TIMUR 2014-2018." *Nucl. Phys.* 13(1):104–16.
- [21] Suwarno, Windy Paskawati, Pamerdi Giri Wiloso, and Wilson M. A. Therik. 2018. "NTT DALAM CAHAYA ACTOR NETWORK THEORY: Studi Kasus Human Trafficking Berkedok Pengiriman Tenaga Kerja Indonesia Di Nusa Tenggara Timur." *Kritis* 27(2):107–35. doi: <https://doi.org/10.24246/kritis.v27i2p107-135>.
- [22] Tefa, Gradiana, and Florianus P. Thaal. 2019. "Kinerja Pos Lintas Batas Negara (Plbn) Terpadu Wini Di Kawasan Perbatasan Ri - Rdtl Kabupaten Timor Tengah Utara Provinsi Nusa Tenggara Timur." *Jurnal Pemerintahan Dan Keamanan Publik (JP Dan KP)* 11–24. doi: <https://doi.org/10.33701/jpkp.v1i1.711>.

- 
- [23] Utami, Penny Naluria. 2019. "Penanganan Kasus Tindak Pidana Perdagangan Orang Oleh Pemerintah Provinsi Nusa Tenggara Timur." *Jurnal HAM* 10(2):195. doi: [DOI:10.30641/ham.2019.10.195-216](https://doi.org/10.30641/ham.2019.10.195-216).
- [24] Wetlin, Maria, Yoanna Lumenta, Christian Herman, Johan De Fretes, and Wilson M. A. Therik. 2025. "Upaya Pemerintah Indonesia Dalam Memberantas Human Trafficking Di Nusa Tenggara Timur Pasca Pandemi Covid-19 ( 2021-2022 )." *Jurnal Niara* 17(3):1–16.