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Collaborative Public Governance in Implementing Indonesia's One Fuel Price Policy: Evidence from Fuel Distribution in Frontier, Outermost, and Disadvantaged Regions

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ABSTRACT

Indonesia's One Fuel Price Policy aims to reduce energy disparities by ensuring equal fuel prices in frontier, outermost, and disadvantaged (3T) regions. While the policy has expanded fuel access, limited studies have examined its implementation from an integrated public governance and public management perspective. This study analyzes the collaborative governance structure, policy implementation, and strategic communication supporting the program. A qualitative descriptive approach was employed using secondary data from official regulations, reports, and publications issued by the Downstream Oil and Gas Regulatory Agency (BPH Migas), the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources, and Pertamina. The data were analyzed through thematic content analysis. The findings indicate that policy implementation is supported by collaborative governance involving central and local governments, BPH Migas, and Pertamina, resulting in the establishment of 583 fuel distribution points despite significant geographical and logistical challenges. Strategic communication also enhances coordination and public trust throughout implementation. This study demonstrates that integrating collaborative governance, adaptive public management, and strategic communication strengthens policy implementation and provides practical insights for delivering equitable public services in geographically challenging regions.

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1. Introduction

Equitable access to energy has become an essential dimension of public governance because energy is not merely an economic commodity but also a fundamental public service that supports social welfare, economic productivity, and regional development. In public administration, equitable service delivery reflects good governance principles, including transparency, accountability, participation, and effectiveness in creating public value (UNDP, 1997; Bovens, 2007). In many developing countries, unequal energy access continues to reinforce territorial disparities, particularly in remote and geographically isolated regions. Governments therefore increasingly rely on collaborative governance to coordinate public and non-public actors in delivering complex services that cannot be managed effectively by a single institution. Such governance emphasizes institutional collaboration, trust building, facilitative leadership, and shared decision-making (Ansell & Gash, 2008; Emerson, Nabatchi, & Balogh, 2012; Bryson, Crosby, & Stone, 2015).

Indonesia faces distinctive governance challenges due to its archipelagic geography, uneven infrastructure, and significant regional disparities. Before the One Fuel Price Policy (*Kebijakan BBM Satu Harga*), fuel prices in frontier, outermost, and disadvantaged (3T) regions often reached IDR 60,000–100,000 per liter, far above the nationally regulated Pertalite price of approximately IDR 10,000 per liter (BPH Migas, 2024). These disparities reflected not only high transportation costs but also unequal access to essential public services, with wider consequences for regional development, investment, and social equity. The Government of Indonesia therefore introduced the policy to equalize fuel prices and expand energy access as part of its commitment to inclusive development and territorial justice.

Policy implementation, however, extends beyond price regulation. Distributing fuel across remote islands, mountainous areas, and regions with limited transportation infrastructure requires coordination among the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources, the Downstream Oil and Gas Regulatory Agency (BPH Migas), PT Pertamina, provincial governments, district governments, transportation providers, and local communities. This institutional interdependence illustrates the need for governance arrangements that cross administrative, sectoral, and jurisdictional boundaries. Ansell and Gash (2008) identify facilitative leadership, institutional design, and trust as central to collaboration, while Emerson et al. (2012) emphasize principled engagement, shared motivation, and joint capacity. These dimensions are especially important in geographically disadvantaged regions, where logistical complexity can weaken policy consistency and service reliability.

From a public management perspective, implementation also depends on the capacity to coordinate actors, manage operational risks, and communicate policy objectives. Public management reforms have shifted government performance from administrative compliance toward effectiveness, responsiveness, and service quality (Osborne & Gaebler, 1992). Public management must also create public value by balancing efficiency with equity, accountability, and citizen-oriented outcomes (Alford & Hughes, 2008). Strategic government communication is therefore not merely a public relations function but a managerial mechanism that improves transparency, stakeholder coordination, public understanding, and trust (Liu, Horsley, & Levenshus, 2010; Canel & Luoma-aho, 2019). Governance effectiveness should thus be examined through the interaction of collaborative arrangements, adaptive management, and strategic communication.

Previous studies have addressed the One Fuel Price Policy from several perspectives. Rahmad (2020) emphasized transportation infrastructure and storage facilities in fuel distribution across 3T regions. Siregar and Lubis (2021) identified institutional coordination and policy synchronization between central and local governments as major implementation challenges, while Widodo and Santoso (2022) highlighted adaptive institutional arrangements and strong local leadership. However, these studies predominantly treat infrastructure, logistics, institutional coordination, and regional governance as separate dimensions.

This separation leaves a clear theoretical and empirical gap. Existing research has not adequately explained how collaborative governance, public management, and strategic government communication interact as mutually reinforcing mechanisms in the implementation of a nationwide energy-equality policy. It also provides limited explanation of how this interaction affects implementation effectiveness, public trust, and equitable service delivery in geographically difficult settings. Accordingly, this study develops an integrated analytical framework that combines these three perspectives to examine Indonesia’s One Fuel Price Policy. Its novelty lies in moving beyond single-dimensional economic, logistical, or institutional analysis by demonstrating how institutional collaboration, adaptive managerial capacity, and strategic communication jointly shape policy implementation. The study therefore contributes to collaborative governance and public management theory while offering practical recommendations for strengthening governance capacity in strategic national programs requiring cross-sectoral coordination and territorial equity.

2. Method

This study employed a qualitative descriptive research design supported by quantitative secondary data to examine the governance arrangements, policy implementation, and strategic communication of Indonesia's One Fuel Price Policy. A qualitative approach was selected because the study seeks to understand institutional interactions, governance mechanisms, and policy implementation processes rather than to test causal relationships. The descriptive design enables a comprehensive interpretation of governance practices based on documentary evidence while contextualizing quantitative program achievements within broader public administration perspectives.

The study relied exclusively on documentary sources obtained from publicly accessible and authoritative government publications. The primary data sources comprised official policy documents, including Presidential Regulations, Ministerial Regulations of the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources, decisions issued by the Downstream Oil and Gas Regulatory Agency (BPH Migas), annual reports, official statistical publications, and implementation reports related to the One Fuel Price Policy. In addition, presentation materials published by BPH Migas served as an important empirical source because they contained program performance indicators, implementation progress, communication strategies, and documented stakeholder testimonials. These documents were selected using three criteria: (1) direct relevance to the implementation of the One Fuel Price Policy; (2) publication by authorized government institutions responsible for policy formulation or implementation; and (3) availability of verifiable qualitative and quantitative information supporting policy evaluation.

Data were collected through systematic document analysis and documentary review. All documents were catalogued according to publication year, institutional source, document type, and substantive content before analysis. Documentary analysis focused on identifying governance arrangements, institutional responsibilities, implementation mechanisms, policy outputs, communication strategies, and implementation challenges. Quantitative information, including the number of fuel distribution points and implementation coverage, was extracted to complement qualitative interpretation rather than to conduct statistical inference.

The analytical process followed qualitative thematic analysis. Initially, all documents were read repeatedly to achieve data familiarization. Subsequently, meaningful units of information were coded and categorized according to the analytical framework developed from the literature on collaborative governance, public management, and strategic government communication. The coding process generated three overarching analytical themes: (1) collaborative public governance, including institutional coordination, stakeholder roles, and accountability; (2) policy implementation, including operational achievements, implementation challenges, and adaptive management; and (3) strategic government communication, including communication objectives, stakeholder engagement, public trust, and policy legitimacy. The relationships among these themes were then interpreted to explain how governance mechanisms collectively supported the implementation of the One Fuel Price Policy.

To enhance methodological rigor, this study adopted several trustworthiness strategies. Credibility was strengthened through data triangulation by comparing information across regulations, official reports, institutional publications, and implementation documents. Dependability was supported by maintaining a transparent documentation process that recorded document selection, coding procedures, and analytical decisions throughout the study. Confirmability was enhanced by grounding all interpretations in documentary evidence rather than researcher assumptions, while transferability was facilitated through detailed descriptions of the Indonesian policy context, enabling readers to assess the applicability of the findings to other strategic public service programs.

The analytical framework integrates Collaborative Governance (Ansell & Gash, 2008; Emerson et al., 2012), Public Management (Osborne & Gaebler, 1992; Alford & Hughes, 2008), and Strategic Government Communication (Liu et al., 2010; Canel & Luoma-aho, 2019). These complementary perspectives provide the conceptual basis for examining how institutional collaboration, adaptive management, and communication practices interact to strengthen policy implementation in geographically disadvantaged regions.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1. Collaborative Public Governance in the One Fuel Price Policy

Documentary analysis indicates that the implementation of Indonesia's One Fuel Price Policy is supported by a collaborative governance structure involving multiple public institutions with complementary responsibilities. As presented in Table 1, BPH Migas functions as the central coordinating agency responsible for regulation, supervision, and cross-sectoral coordination, while the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources establishes national policy directions, PT Pertamina manages operational fuel distribution, and local governments facilitate implementation at the regional level. This institutional arrangement demonstrates that the policy is implemented through an integrated governance network rather than a conventional hierarchical administrative structure.

Table 1. Key Stakeholders and Their Roles in the Implementation of the One Fuel Price Policy

Stakeholder	Primary Role
BPH Migas	Central Coordinator, Regulator, and Supervisory Agency

Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources	National Policy Formulator
PT Pertamina	Fuel Distribution and Operational Implementer
Local Governments	Local Implementation Partner

The governance configuration illustrated in Table 1 reflects the essential characteristics of collaborative governance, in which public organizations jointly address complex policy issues through institutional interdependence, consensus-oriented decision-making, and shared responsibility (Ansell & Gash, 2008). Unlike conventional command-and-control approaches, the One Fuel Price Policy requires continuous coordination because the success of implementation depends on synchronizing policy formulation, regulatory oversight, logistics management, and local facilitation. This finding reinforces Emerson, Nabatchi, and Balogh's (2012) Collaborative Governance Regime framework, which argues that institutional collaboration emerges when complex public problems exceed the capacity of individual organizations and require sustained interaction among multiple stakeholders.

A significant finding concerns the strategic role of BPH Migas as the focal coordinating institution. Beyond exercising its formal regulatory authority, BPH Migas actively develops institutional legitimacy by coordinating communication, monitoring implementation progress, and facilitating collaboration among implementing organizations. This observation supports the network leadership perspective proposed by Saz-Carranza and Ospina (2011), which emphasizes that effective governance networks require facilitative leadership capable of reducing organizational fragmentation and strengthening collective commitment. Consequently, leadership within collaborative governance should not be interpreted merely as administrative control but as the capacity to mobilize institutional resources, build trust, and sustain cooperation across organizational boundaries.

The findings also demonstrate that transparency and accountability constitute important governance mechanisms throughout policy implementation. Official publications, implementation reports, and communication materials disseminated through institutional media provide evidence that accountability is operationalized through continuous disclosure of implementation progress, program achievements, and public information. This practice reflects the principles of good governance proposed by UNDP (1997), which identify transparency, accountability, participation, and effectiveness as essential components of public sector governance. Similarly, Bovens (2007) argues that accountability requires public institutions to justify their actions before citizens through accessible and reliable information. Therefore, transparency within the One Fuel Price Policy should be understood not merely as compliance with administrative procedures but as a governance strategy designed to strengthen institutional legitimacy and public confidence.

Compared with previous studies, the present findings both confirm and extend existing knowledge. Siregar and Lubis (2021) emphasized that institutional coordination remains a critical determinant of successful implementation of the One Fuel Price Policy. While the present study supports this conclusion, it further demonstrates that communication-based accountability functions as an equally important governance mechanism for sustaining institutional legitimacy and public trust. Consequently, collaborative governance in this policy extends beyond coordination among implementing agencies to include transparency and strategic communication as integral components of governance effectiveness.

3.2. Policy Implementation: Achievements and Operational Challenges

Implementation outcomes demonstrate considerable progress in expanding equitable fuel access across Indonesia. As shown in Table 2, the government had established 583 fuel distribution points by 2024, with 208 locations (35.7%) situated in Maluku and Papua, followed by Kalimantan (20.4%), Nusa Tenggara (17.5%), and other regions (26.4%). Rather than reflecting uniform geographical expansion, the distribution pattern indicates a deliberate implementation strategy prioritizing frontier, outermost, and disadvantaged (3T) regions where disparities in fuel prices and energy accessibility have historically been greatest.

Table 2. Distribution of Fuel Distribution Points by Major Region

Region	Number of Distribution Points	Percentage (%)
Maluku & Papua	208	35.7
Kalimantan	119	20.4
Nusa Tenggara	102	17.5
Other Regions*	154	26.4
Total	583	100.0

*Note: Other Regions include Sumatra, Sulawesi, Java, Madura, and Bali.

The geographical concentration presented in Table 2 illustrates that implementation success should not be evaluated solely through quantitative indicators but also through spatial equity. The allocation of more than seventy percent of distribution facilities within eastern Indonesia demonstrates that policy implementation prioritizes distributive justice instead of administrative convenience. This finding supports the government's objective of reducing territorial inequality by ensuring equal access to subsidized fuel regardless of geographical location. Accordingly, implementation effectiveness should be interpreted not only as organizational performance but also as the realization of energy justice through equitable public service delivery.

Nevertheless, documentary evidence indicates that implementation continues to encounter substantial operational challenges. Remote islands, mountainous terrain, inadequate transportation infrastructure, and long distribution routes significantly increase logistical complexity and operational costs. These findings are consistent with Rahmad (2020), who identified geographical isolation and infrastructure limitations as the principal obstacles affecting fuel distribution in disadvantaged regions. However, the present study extends this perspective by demonstrating that institutional collaboration substantially mitigates these structural constraints. Rather than viewing geographical barriers solely as technical problems, the findings reveal that adaptive coordination among BPH Migas, PT Pertamina, and local governments enables more flexible resource allocation and operational decision-making, thereby enhancing implementation effectiveness despite challenging environmental conditions.

The collaborative implementation process is further illustrated in Figure 1, which visualizes BPH Migas as the central coordination node connecting the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources, PT Pertamina, local governments, and beneficiary communities. The figure demonstrates that implementation follows an interconnected governance network rather than a linear bureaucratic chain of command. Such institutional interdependence closely aligns with Emerson et al.'s (2012) collaborative governance regime, emphasizing principled engagement, shared motivation, and joint institutional capacity as prerequisites for addressing complex public policy challenges.

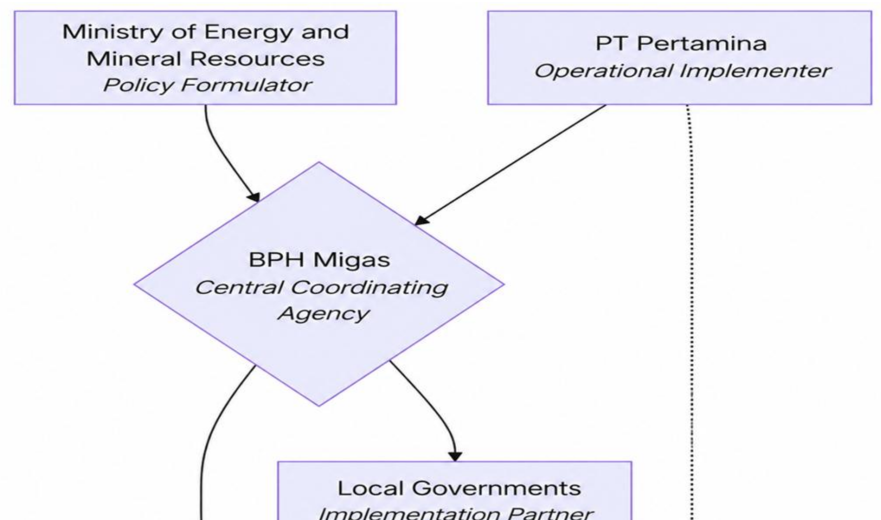

Figure 1. Collaborative Governance Model in the Implementation of the One Fuel Price Policy

Overall, the findings suggest that implementation success cannot be attributed solely to infrastructure expansion or regulatory intervention. Instead, successful implementation emerges from the interaction between collaborative governance, adaptive institutional coordination, and continuous communication among implementing organizations. Compared with previous studies that primarily focused on infrastructure or logistical constraints, the present research demonstrates that governance capacity constitutes an equally important determinant of implementation effectiveness, thereby extending the existing literature on collaborative public governance in strategic national energy policies.

3.3. Public Management Perspective: Strategic Communication and Public Value

Beyond institutional coordination and operational implementation, documentary evidence indicates that the success of the One Fuel Price Policy is closely associated with strategic public communication integrated into policy management. As summarized in Table 3, communication activities were systematically organized using the Input–Output–Outcome–Impact (IOOI) framework. The communication process began with the availability of human resources and contextual information regarding 3T regions (input), followed by communication activities through media campaigns, public socialization, and educational programs such as *Goes to Campus* (activity). These initiatives generated measurable outputs, including 2,273 online news publications and high public engagement on social media, while the intended outcomes were reflected in improved public understanding and positive perceptions of the policy.

Table 3. Strategic Communication Analysis Using the IOOI Model

Stage	Component	Performance Indicator
Input	Public Relations personnel; data on 3T (Frontier, Outermost, and Disadvantaged) regions	Availability of human and informational resources
Activity	Media campaigns, public outreach, and Goes to Campus program	Diversity of communication channels and engagement activities
Output	Media publications and social media engagement	2,273 online news articles; 91% positive engagement (likes)
Outcome	Public understanding and support	Improved positive public perception

The evidence presented in Table 3 demonstrates that communication was managed as an integral component of public management rather than merely as an administrative support function. This finding supports Liu, Horsley, and Levenshus (2010), who argue that government communication has evolved from conventional public relations into a strategic managerial instrument capable of strengthening policy legitimacy, encouraging stakeholder engagement, and reducing public uncertainty. Similarly, Canel and Luoma-aho (2019) emphasize that strategic communication enables governments to improve transparency, accountability, and institutional credibility through continuous interaction with citizens. In the context of the One Fuel Price Policy, communication was not limited to disseminating information regarding fuel prices but also functioned to explain policy objectives, communicate implementation progress, and reinforce public confidence in the government's commitment to equitable energy access.

The communication strategy further illustrates the importance of integrating managerial and governance perspectives within public policy implementation. Complex national policies frequently encounter implementation risks arising not only from operational constraints but also from misinformation, public skepticism, and inconsistent stakeholder expectations. By adopting a structured communication strategy, BPH Migas attempted to minimize these risks while strengthening collaboration among implementing institutions and beneficiary communities. Consequently, communication served as a governance mechanism that complemented institutional coordination by creating shared understanding among stakeholders. This finding extends previous communication studies, which primarily examined communication effectiveness through media exposure, by demonstrating that communication also contributes directly to implementation performance and collaborative governance.

From a public management perspective, the observed communication practices also indicate a transition from traditional bureaucratic administration toward a more adaptive managerial approach. Osborne and Gaebler (1992) argue that contemporary public management requires governments to become increasingly responsive, innovative, and citizen-oriented rather than merely complying with administrative procedures. The communication initiatives identified in this study reflect these principles by emphasizing responsiveness to community information needs, expanding stakeholder engagement, and supporting policy implementation through proactive public interaction. Therefore, communication should be interpreted not simply as an information dissemination activity but as an organizational capability that improves implementation effectiveness within complex governance environments.

The documentary evidence additionally indicates that the One Fuel Price Policy generated measurable socioeconomic impacts. According to BPH Migas (2024), fuel prices in several frontier, outermost, and disadvantaged regions declined from approximately IDR 60,000–100,000 per liter to the nationally regulated retail price of approximately IDR 10,000 per liter. This substantial reduction contributed directly to lowering transportation costs, improving household purchasing power, and expanding economic opportunities within remote communities. Beneficiary testimonials documented by BPH Migas further suggest increased perceptions of fairness, improved accessibility to essential energy services, and greater confidence in government intervention. These qualitative outcomes demonstrate that the policy achieved not only administrative outputs but also broader social outcomes associated with inclusive public service delivery.

The findings also contribute to the evolving discussion on public value within public management. While New Public Management traditionally emphasizes efficiency and performance measurement, contemporary public administration increasingly recognizes that government performance should also be evaluated through equity, social inclusion, and citizen well-being (Alford & Hughes, 2008). The One Fuel Price Policy illustrates this broader perspective by demonstrating that effective public management extends beyond cost efficiency toward creating tangible public value through distributive justice and equal access to public services. Consequently, the policy should be understood as an example of how managerial effectiveness and social equity can be pursued simultaneously within strategic national programs.

Compared with previous studies, the present findings offer several important contributions. Earlier research largely focused on logistical constraints (Rahmad, 2020), institutional coordination (Siregar & Lubis, 2021), or governance in disadvantaged regions (Widodo & Santoso, 2022) as separate dimensions of policy implementation. In contrast, this study demonstrates that implementation effectiveness emerges from the interaction among collaborative governance, adaptive public management, and strategic government communication. Institutional coordination enables resource integration, public management enhances organizational responsiveness, and communication strengthens legitimacy and public trust. These governance dimensions reinforce one another rather than functioning independently, thereby producing more comprehensive policy outcomes.

Overall, the findings suggest that the implementation of the One Fuel Price Policy represents an integrated governance model capable of addressing complex public service challenges in geographically disadvantaged regions. Collaborative governance provides the institutional foundation for inter-organizational cooperation, adaptive public management strengthens operational responsiveness, and strategic communication supports transparency, accountability, and public legitimacy. The interaction among these three dimensions explains why the policy has been able to maintain implementation across diverse geographical contexts despite substantial logistical and institutional constraints.

From a theoretical perspective, this study extends the collaborative governance literature by demonstrating that governance effectiveness should not be explained solely through institutional coordination or network structures. Instead, effective governance also depends on managerial capability and strategic communication that sustain collaboration, reinforce accountability, and enhance public trust throughout policy implementation. Accordingly, the study proposes a more integrated analytical perspective that combines collaborative governance, public management, and strategic government communication for examining complex public policies requiring cross-sectoral coordination.

From a practical perspective, the findings suggest that future strategic public service programs should strengthen institutional collaboration while simultaneously investing in adaptive management and evidence-based communication strategies. Government agencies should therefore view communication not as an auxiliary function but as a strategic governance capability that enhances policy acceptance, stakeholder participation, and implementation sustainability. Such an integrated governance approach may also be applicable to other national development programs involving multiple organizations and geographically diverse implementation environments.

4. Conclusion

This study demonstrates that the implementation of Indonesia's One Fuel Price Policy should be understood as an integrated public governance process rather than merely a fuel distribution program. The policy illustrates how collaborative governance, adaptive public management, and strategic government communication interact to address complex public service challenges in geographically disadvantaged regions. Instead of functioning independently, these governance dimensions reinforce one another by facilitating institutional coordination, strengthening implementation capacity, and enhancing public legitimacy. Accordingly, the effectiveness of the policy lies not only in achieving distributive objectives but also in establishing governance arrangements capable of balancing administrative performance with the broader goal of equitable public service delivery.

From a theoretical perspective, this study contributes to the public administration literature by extending collaborative governance beyond its conventional emphasis on inter-organizational coordination. The findings indicate that collaborative governance becomes more effective when supported by adaptive public management practices and strategic government communication that collectively strengthen accountability, transparency, and public trust. By integrating these three perspectives within a single analytical framework, the study offers a more comprehensive explanation of how complex national policies are implemented across diverse institutional and geographical contexts. This integrated perspective enriches existing discussions on collaborative governance and demonstrates its applicability to strategic public service delivery in developing countries.

From a practical perspective, the findings suggest that policymakers should prioritize institutional collaboration while simultaneously strengthening managerial capacity and evidence-based communication strategies. Government agencies implementing strategic national programs should regard communication as a governance capability rather than a supporting administrative function because transparent and consistent communication enhances stakeholder coordination, public acceptance, and implementation sustainability. Furthermore, adaptive governance mechanisms that enable continuous coordination among central government, implementing agencies, and local governments are essential for addressing operational challenges in remote and disadvantaged regions.

This study has several limitations. First, the analysis relies primarily on official documentary sources published by government institutions, which may emphasize institutional achievements and therefore provide limited representation of perspectives from local governments, implementing officers, or beneficiary communities. Second, the study adopts a qualitative documentary approach that does not assess the causal relationship between governance arrangements and policy outcomes. Consequently, the findings should be interpreted within the scope of documentary evidence rather than as generalizable causal conclusions.

Future research is encouraged to expand this study by incorporating mixed-methods approaches that combine documentary analysis with interviews, surveys, or field observations involving policymakers, implementing agencies, and communities in 3T regions. Comparative studies across different strategic public service programs would also provide broader insights into the applicability of integrated governance models. In addition, future investigations may examine implementation efficiency through cost–benefit analysis or explore inter-organizational collaboration using Social Network

Analysis (SNA) to better understand the dynamics of governance networks supporting equitable public service delivery.

Declaration of Conflicting Interest

The authors declare that there are no conflicts of interest regarding the research, authorship, and publication of this article. Although one of the authors is affiliated with the Downstream Oil and Gas Regulatory Agency (BPH Migas), the study was conducted independently using publicly available documents and official policy publications. The interpretations, analyses, and conclusions presented in this article are solely those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official views or policies of BPH Migas or any other affiliated institution.

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