

Implementation of the Policy to Accelerate Stunting Reduction in Padang Panjang City

Rahmat Naufaldo¹, Rahmadani Yusran²

^{1,2}Departemen Ilmu Administrasi Negara, Universitas Negeri Padang, Indonesia

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Abstrak

This study aims to examine the implementation of the stunting reduction acceleration policy in Padang Panjang City. The study is motivated by the continued prevalence of stunting cases, which have significant implications for the quality of human resources. As part of efforts to address this issue, the Indonesian government enacted Presidential Regulation Number 72 of 2021 concerning the Acceleration of Stunting Reduction. This research employed a qualitative approach using a descriptive method. The study was conducted in Padang Panjang City, with the Health Office serving as the primary institution responsible for policy implementation. Research data were collected through interviews with informants selected based on criteria relevant to the objectives of the study. The findings reveal that the implementation of the stunting reduction acceleration policy in Padang Panjang City has not yet been fully effective. Several challenges were identified, including low community participation in stunting prevention programs and inadequate coordination and synergy among relevant stakeholders and government agencies. These challenges have affected the effectiveness of policy implementation in achieving the targeted reduction of stunting rates. Therefore, strengthening community engagement and enhancing cross-sectoral coordination are essential to improve policy implementation and ensure the successful achievement of stunting reduction objectives.

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Corresponding Author:

Rahmat Naufaldo

Departemen Ilmu Administrasi Negara, Universitas Negeri Padang, Indonesia

Email Coresspondent: rahmatnaufaldo@gmail.com

1. INTRODUCTION

Stunting can be defined with various explanations, but in general, it is interpreted as a growth disorder in children under the age of five years caused by chronic malnutrition since early life, resulting in the child's height or length being too short for his age of *Stunting* seen. It begins in the womb and is only apparent in children when they reach two years of age. This is the standard for toddler health, as agreed by the WHO in the 2006 Multicenter Growth Reference Study (MGRS). *Stunting* is not only related to the problem of a child's height being shorter than the standard for their age, but also has serious implications for their future quality of life. This condition can increase the risk of various chronic diseases, cause delays in cognitive development, and reduce individual competitiveness. Consequently, stunting can hinder a child's optimal physical growth and brain development. So that in handling, *stunting* can really be realized well. Presidential Regulation of the Republic of Indonesia Number 72 of 2021 concerning the Acceleration of Stunting Reduction serves as the foundation for the government's efforts to accelerate the reduction of stunting rates in Indonesia. The regulation explains that the acceleration of stunting reduction is carried out through specific and

sensitive interventions implemented in an integrated, comprehensive, high-quality, and sustainable manner, involving various sectors from the central, regional, and village levels. To achieve this goal, the government has developed a National Strategy for the Acceleration of Stunting Reduction, consisting of five main pillars as guidelines for the implementation of various programs and activities. This national strategy is aimed at supporting the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by reducing the prevalence of stunting in children under five years of age, in accordance with nationally established targets. Furthermore, the Regulation concerning the Acceleration of Stunting Reduction contained in the Regulation of the National Population and Family Planning Agency of the Republic of Indonesia Number 12 of 2021 concerning the National Action Plan for Accelerating the Reduction of the Number of Stunting. The 2021-2024 Indonesian National Health Regulation (PPN) explains that as a foundation for accelerating stunting reduction, this regulation provides direction and guidance for the central government, regional governments, and all stakeholders in implementing various concrete actions in an integrated and high-quality manner. The approach used emphasizes synergy between sectors through convergent, holistic, and integrative implementation. Furthermore, Presidential Instruction Number 1 of 2017 concerning the Healthy Living Community Movement (GERMAS) supports these efforts by increasing education regarding balanced nutritional patterns, providing healthy food, and accelerating community nutrition improvements.

Data shows that in 2015, the prevalence of stunting among toddlers in Indonesia was 36.4%, meaning approximately 8.8 million children experienced stunted growth due to malnutrition. This condition resulted in children's height being lower than the growth standards for their age. This figure exceeded the WHO's recommended threshold of 20%. Compared to Southeast Asian countries, Indonesia ranked second in terms of stunting prevalence stunting the highest after Laos, which reached 43.8%. However, the results of the Basic Health Research (Basic Health Research) conducted by the Indonesian Ministry of Health's Research and Development Agency in 2018 showed improvements. The prevalence of stunting decreased from 37.2% in 2013 to 30.8% in 2018 (Ministry of Health of the Republic of Indonesia, 2018).

However, in its implementation, stunting based on the above regulations, problems such as those in Sigi Regency are still being experienced. Sigi Regency data shows improvements in stunting management in toddlers aged 0–23 months. The prevalence rate, which initially reached 20.2% in 2019, decreased to 16.59% in 2020, then dropped again to 14.40% in 2021. This decline represents a 2.19% improvement over two years. However, this success has not been evenly distributed, as several sub-districts, such as Pipikoro, South Kulawi, Dolo, Tanambulava, Biromaru, Marawola, and Kinovaro, still experience a significant increase in stunting cases. Some problems that are factors in the increase in numbers: Stunting. In several areas in Sigi Regency, the distribution is influenced by the availability of food and nutritional intake for infants under 5 years (toddlers), which is not optimal or sufficient, and knowledge of parenting patterns and pregnant women is a problem in several villages in Sigi Regency (Rika Fitrauni et al., 2022). Then, the acceleration of the decline of stunting in Sribasuki Village, Kotabumi District, North Lampung Regency, regarding the factors that influence the determinants of the number of stunting, found that 80.2% of the majority of mothers lacked knowledge about Stunting and 67.7% of toddlers do not receive adequate nutrition due to the frequency of poor family economic status (M Nabil Suthoni, 2023). Furthermore, the results of research in Salambue Village, Padangsidempuan Tenggara District, North Sumatra Province, showed that the level of mothers' understanding regarding diet and nutrition in preventing stunting was still low before the education provided through leaflets. Of the total respondents, only 2 people (6.9%) gave correct answers, while the majority of respondents, 27 people (91.3%), showed inappropriate behavior and understanding. After being provided with education, mothers' eating and nutrition behavior improved, with 20 people (69%) answering correctly and 9 people (31%) answering incorrectly (Almahdy Pohan, 2023).

Accelerated decline of stunting in West Sumatra, it is still not optimal, such as in West Pasaman Regency, where there are poor parenting patterns for toddlers with low levels of exclusive breastfeeding, which can increase the incidence of stunting in toddlers aged 24-59 months. Parental knowledge and awareness are required by regularly bringing children to the integrated health post (Posyandu) to monitor their growth. The community can maximize the function of the Posyandu, which not only focuses on health services, but also on monitoring children's growth and development. (Yuliza Anggraini, 2019). Then, in Solok Regency, prevention efforts for stunting. In Solok Regency, West Sumatra, the results are still not optimal due to a lack of human resources and available budget. Therefore, regulations were created (Rizqa Inatsaa et al., 2023). Furthermore, stunting prevention efforts in Solok City have not been fully effective due to weaknesses in cross-sectoral coordination. Regional Apparatus Organizations (OPDs) that play a role in handling stunting have not yet established optimal collaboration with other relevant agencies. Furthermore, public understanding of stunting, especially among prospective brides, pregnant women, and postpartum mothers, remains relatively low. As a remedial measure, the Population and Family Planning Control Office have implemented various strategies, such as providing education and outreach to the community and strengthening coordination between OPDs, so that the implementation of the stunting prevention program can be more effective and integrated. However, despite these efforts, some communities and OPDs still do not understand stunting (Muthia Safira, 2023).

As a commitment to addressing stunting, the Padang Panjang City Government issued Padang Panjang Mayoral Regulation Number 47 of 2022 concerning the Acceleration of Stunting Prevention and Reduction for 2022–2024. This regulation outlines strategies for accelerating stunting reduction, aimed at reducing the prevalence of stunting by improving the quality of family life, meeting community nutritional needs, improving parenting practices, increasing the quality and reach of health services, and providing adequate drinking water and sanitation facilities. Based on Article 3, the target groups for this program include adolescents, prospective married couples, pregnant women, breastfeeding mothers, and children under five years of age, namely 0 to 59 months. The prevalence target, Stunting. According to Padang Panjang Mayoral Regulation Number 47 of 2022, this can be achieved through the implementation of the 5 pillars in the Accelerated Population Reduction strategy. Stunting which includes; increasing the commitment and vision of the Mayor's leadership, improving communication The program to accelerate stunting reduction is implemented through various steps, including increasing community awareness and independence in maintaining health, strengthening the synergy of implementing specific and sensitive interventions at the OPD and sub-district levels, increasing food security and fulfilling individual and family nutrition, and strengthening support systems through the development of data, information, research, and sustainable innovation.

However, research results show that stunting reduction in Padang Panjang City is still not optimal. This is evident in the following issues:

First, the 2023 Evaluation indicates that knowledge regarding handling stunting is not evenly distributed in society. This lack of understanding is often found in at-risk family groups, stunting, and families who have family members with stunting conditions.

Second, there are still many actors in the implementation. Stunting itself does not yet fully understand how the reduction strategy works. This itself is certainly an obstacle in the implementation and pursuit of the target of reducing the prevalence of the number of Stunting in Padang Panjang City. In line with these two issues, this is strengthened by the statement of the Deputy Mayor of Padang Panjang City, Mr. Asrul, based on data obtained from the news portal harianhaluan.id (2023). According to Mr. Asrul, as the Deputy Mayor of Padang Panjang City, who said;

"The results of this year's evaluation show that understanding of stunting management remains unequal among the parties involved. This lack of understanding is evident among some families at risk of stunting, families with stunting cases, and even among some members of the implementation team. Ideally, after more than a year of program implementation, all stakeholders should have a

good understanding of stunting management and be able to play an active role in supporting the success of the accelerated stunting reduction program."

The third problem is that some regional government agencies (OPDs) are still not fully involved, citing a lack of budget. This was also conveyed by Mr. Asrul, Deputy Mayor of Padang Panjang City, based on data from the news portal harianhaluan.id (2023), as follows:

"There are still several regional government agencies (OPDs) whose involvement in the Basunting Movement is not yet optimal. They generally cite the lack of a dedicated budget to support these activities. However, whether a budget is available or not, this program can still be implemented through voluntary contributions, such as joint contributions, regular donations, or alms. The most important thing is the awareness and commitment of each OPD to contribute to stunting management."

This problem is certainly a challenge for the City Government and all actors implementing the Accelerated Reduction Strategy of *Stunting* in Padang Panjang City. Based on the explanation above, the author tries to analyze the problem with the title **"Implementation of the Policy to Accelerate Stunting Reduction in Padang Panjang City"**.

2. METHOD

This study applied a qualitative approach with descriptive methods to examine the implementation of the policy to accelerate stunting reduction in Padang Panjang City. The study was conducted at the Padang Panjang City Health Office, an agency that plays a crucial role in implementing the policy. Informants were selected using purposive sampling, based on their level of involvement and understanding of the policy implementation. Data were collected through interviews, observation, and documentation. To ensure data validity, this study utilized source triangulation. Furthermore, the data were analyzed using the Miles and Huberman model, which includes data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing and verification.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A. Research result

1) **Implementation of the Stunting Reduction Acceleration Policy to Reduce the Prevalence of Stunting in Padang Panjang City**

The research results indicate that the implementation of the Stunting Reduction Acceleration Policy in Padang Panjang City has not been optimal. The policy is implemented through various intervention programs and inter-organizational collaborations based on Presidential Regulation Number 72 of 2021 and Padang Panjang Mayoral Regulation Number 47 of 2022. However, various obstacles remain in its implementation, impacting the program's effectiveness.

Regarding the behavior of target groups, low community enthusiasm for participating in outreach and programs to accelerate stunting reduction remains evident. Some communities, particularly families at risk of stunting and pregnant women, still lack an adequate understanding of stunting and its impact on child growth and development. This situation has resulted in the behavioral changes expected through the program not being optimally achieved.

Institutionally, the Padang Panjang City Health Office has collaborated with various agencies, such as the Office of Religious Affairs (KUA), the Social Services Agency, and the National Population and Family Planning Board (BKKBN), to support the implementation of the program to accelerate stunting reduction. This collaboration includes

data collection on prospective brides and grooms, community outreach, and outreach on stunting prevention.

However, the implementation of cross-sector collaboration still faces several challenges. These include miscommunication in information dissemination, inconsistent activity schedules between agencies, and differing program priorities among organizations. These conditions impact the effectiveness of coordination in the implementation of the stunting reduction acceleration program.

Furthermore, the Padang Panjang City Government has demonstrated support through the provision of regulations, oversight, budgeting, and human resources. However, the target of reducing stunting prevalence has not been fully achieved due to budget constraints, low community participation, and uneven quality of program implementation resources.

2) **Supporting and Inhibiting Factors in the Implementation of the Policy to Accelerate Stunting Reduction in Padang Panjang City**

a. Supporting Factors

The first supporting factor is the availability of sufficient human resources to implement the accelerated stunting reduction program. The Padang Panjang City Health Office has a team of implementers deemed competent enough to carry out the program and has received support from the government in the form of additional health workers and medical equipment to support field activities.

The second supporting factor is the commitment of the Health Office and local governments to implementing the program to accelerate stunting reduction. This commitment is realized through cross-sectoral collaboration, sustainable program implementation, and regulatory support that serves as a guideline for policy implementation.

b. Inhibiting Factors

The main inhibiting factor is low public participation and knowledge about stunting, particularly among target groups such as pregnant women and families at risk of stunting. This low level of understanding leads to a lack of active participation in outreach activities and government-provided programs.

Another inhibiting factor is the unequal distribution of resources. Assistance in the form of supplementary food and healthcare facilities has not been able to fully reach all families in need due to distribution and logistical constraints. This situation has resulted in program implementation not being optimal.

Furthermore, several program implementers were found to lack adequate competency, impacting the quality of program implementation in the field. Furthermore, budget constraints in several regional government organizations also hampered the optimal implementation of the stunting reduction acceleration program.

B. Discussion

1) **Implementation of the Stunting Reduction Acceleration Policy to Reduce the Prevalence of Stunting in Padang Panjang City**

The research results indicate that the implementation of the policy to accelerate stunting reduction in Padang Panjang City has not been optimal. Based on the Mazmanian and Sabatier policy implementation model, implementation success is influenced by independent variables, intervening variables, and dependent variables. Among the independent variables, low community participation and a lack of understanding of stunting are still found. This situation indicates that the behavioral changes expected through the policy have not been fully achieved in the target group.

Regarding the intervening variable, the Padang Panjang City Government has clear regulations through Presidential Regulation Number 72 of 2021 and Padang Panjang Mayoral Regulation Number 47 of 2022. The clarity of these policy objectives demonstrates the government's efforts to systematically structure the implementation process. However, implementation still faces obstacles such as suboptimal cross-sectoral coordination, limited resources, and low public participation.

Furthermore, regarding the dependent variable, local governments have provided support through regulations, supervision, and the provision of human resources and budgets. However, implementation results have not fully aligned with policy objectives, as various obstacles remain that impact the effectiveness of program implementation. These findings indicate that the success of policy implementation is determined not only by the existence of regulations, but also by the capabilities of implementers, inter-agency coordination, and community involvement as the target group.

2) **Supporting and Inhibiting Factors in the Implementation of the Policy to Accelerate Stunting Reduction in Padang Panjang City**

Supporting factors for the implementation of the policy to accelerate stunting reduction in Padang Panjang City include the availability of adequate human resources and a strong commitment from the Health Office and local government. The availability of implementing personnel, supporting health facilities, and collaboration with various agencies demonstrate the institutional support necessary for successful policy implementation.

On the other hand, the most dominant inhibiting factors are low community participation and a lack of understanding about stunting. This low level of public awareness has prevented the socialization and intervention programs implemented from maximizing their impact on behavior change. Furthermore, the uneven distribution of resources also poses a challenge to program implementation, as some target groups still lack access to optimal services and assistance.

The findings of this study demonstrate that the successful implementation of policies to accelerate stunting reduction requires synergy between the government, program implementers, and the community. Therefore, increasing outreach, strengthening cross-sectoral coordination, equitable distribution of resources, and enhancing the capacity of implementers are crucial steps to enhance the effectiveness of policies to accelerate stunting reduction in Padang Panjang City.

4. CONCLUSION

The implementation of the Stunting Reduction Acceleration Policy in Padang Panjang City has not been optimal in reducing stunting prevalence. Although the local government has implemented various programs to accelerate stunting reduction through regulatory support, cross-sectoral collaboration, and resource provision, policy implementation still faces several obstacles. Low public participation and understanding of stunting, as well as suboptimal coordination between agencies, are factors that influence the effectiveness of policy implementation.

Supporting factors for policy implementation include the availability of sufficient human resources, the availability of supporting facilities and infrastructure, and the commitment of the local government and the Health Office to implementing the program to accelerate stunting reduction. Meanwhile, inhibiting factors identified include low community participation, unequal distribution of resources, budget limitations, and ongoing challenges in coordination and competency among program implementers. Therefore, increased public outreach, strengthened cross-sectoral coordination, equitable distribution of resources, and increased capacity of implementers are needed

to ensure more effective implementation of the policy to accelerate stunting reduction and optimally achieve the goal of stunting reduction in Padang Panjang City.

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