

The Role of Government in Reducing Stunting in Indonesia, Case Study: Optimization of BKKBN in Sukoharjo District

Damayanti Suhita^{1*}, Wirid Winduro², Farco Siswiyanto Raharjo³
Universitas Slamet Riyadi

Corresponding Author: Damayanti Suhita, damayanti.suhita@unisri.ac.id

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ABSTRACT

Indonesia is included in the list of countries with poor nutritional status, according to the World Health Organization (WHO). In 2019, the stunting rate in Indonesia was 27.6%. As a multidimensional problem, stunting requires cross-sectoral solutions. At the regional level, Indonesia has a Population and Family Planning Agency (BKKBN), which is specifically tasked with solving this problem. One area with a history of success in overcoming stunting in Indonesia is Sukoharjo Regency. This research examines the role of the government in Sukoharjo Regency, through the BKKBN, in making various efforts to reduce stunting rates. The research method is qualitative research with an empirical approach. Research data was collected through in-depth interviews, observation, and documentation, then analyzed using interactive analysis techniques. The research results found that the main steps taken were: deploying family cadres to socialize about gynecological health with prospective brides and grooms. The government utilizes technical and strategic regulations and carries out budgetary interventions to maximize the reduction in stunting rates.

INTRODUCTION

Stunting is one of the most important problems faced by many countries in the world. WHO itself notes that there are quite a lot of stunting problems in various parts of the world. At least in 2020, 22 percent, or 149.2 million people, will experience stunting worldwide. This problem is also experienced in Indonesia. According to data from the Asian Development Bank, in 2022, the prevalence of stunting among children under 5 years of age in Indonesia will be 31.8 percent. This is a very high figure because it exceeds the world average percentage. However, with various efforts, at the end of 2022, data from the Indonesian Ministry of Health shows that the government has succeeded in reducing the stunting rate to 21.6 percent (Deviana, 2023).

Regional governments play a very important role, especially as the spearhead in handling the stunting program. As a multidimensional problem, stunting needs a cross-sectoral solution, so the regional government, through the Population and Family Planning Agency (BKKBN), needs to understand, recognize, and commit to developing strategies to combat the stunting problem. It is hoped that various program innovations in the regions will have an orientation towards preventing and handling stunting.

Prevention focuses on local government strategies through the BKKBN to facilitate nutrition so that children's growth and development become ideal. Handling stunting focuses on empowering those who are already stunted. One area in Indonesia that also has quite serious stunting problems is Sukoharjo Regency. The stunting rate in Sukoharjo Regency is quite high. The total number of children experiencing stunting in Sukoharjo Regency is currently 594, spread across eight sub-districts. From these figures, Polokarto District is the area with the most stunting cases. The highest number of stunting cases was in Polokarto District, with 10 people (Solopos, February 16, 2022).

One area in Indonesia that also has quite serious stunting problems is Sukoharjo Regency. The stunting rate in Sukoharjo Regency is quite high. The total number of children experiencing stunting in Sukoharjo Regency is currently 594, spread across eight sub-districts. From these figures, Polokarto District is the area with the most stunting cases. The highest number of stunting cases was in Polokarto District, with 10 people (Solopos, February 16, 2022).

Stunting certainly has a negative impact on the population. The IQ (intelligence quotient) of people with stunting usually experiences obstacles. So it needs cross-sectoral handling. According to the Millennium Challenge Account (2014), stunting is a problem of chronic malnutrition caused by insufficient nutritional intake over a long period of time due to the provision of food that does not meet nutritional needs. According to the Indonesian Ministry of Health (2016), stunting is nutritional status, which is based on the parameters body length according to age (PB/U) or height according to age (TB/U).

The results of anthropometric measurements based on these parameters are compared with WHO standards to determine whether a child is classified as short (<-2 SD) or very short (<-3 SD). The negative condition of stunting means that the Regent of Sukoharjo, through the Sukoharjo Regency BKKBN, must

immediately respond to this problem. Therefore, this research is oriented toward the government's role in dealing with population problems.

Because of the importance of the government's role, this research focuses on the government's role in efforts to overcome stunting in Indonesia. Specifically, the case study focuses on optimizing the role of the BKKBN in Sukoharjo Regency as one of the areas that has a high level of stunting problems while also having the ability to overcome this problem. Knowing the description of the government's role in reducing the stunting rate is important in order to provide an overview of the government's role being carried out effectively, to overcome problems in society.

LITERATURE REVIEW

According to Riyadi (2004:67), the definition of role is an orientation or concept that is formed because a party is in social opposition in community life. This is based on the individual and the reasons for carrying out the desired action. Riyadi defines the role from a different point of view, namely regarding the opposition parties in community and social life. In carrying out its duties, the government has several functions, as follows: (1) Service Function: The difference in the implementation of service functions carried out by the central government and regional governments lies with their respective authorities. The central government's authority covers defense, security, religion, foreign relations, finance, and justice matters. In general, government services include public services and civil services that respect equality; (2) development function: the government must function as a driver of development in its territory, where this development covers all aspects of life, not only physical but also mental and spiritual. Development will decrease if community conditions improve, meaning society is prosperous. So, the development function will be carried out by the government or developing countries and underdeveloped countries, while developed countries will carry out this function as necessary. (3) Empowerment Function: This function is to support the implementation of regional autonomy. This function requires the empowerment of regional governments with sufficient authority to manage regional resources to carry out various decentralized affairs (Hifni, 2017).

In Woodrow Wilson's view in Wibowo (2014) government is an organization of power, not always related to the strength of the armed forces, but two or a group of several people prepared by an organization to realize a common goal with things that provide information for affairs. In this case, the government is the party that holds the legal role in making public policy. The government has the legality and legitimacy to implement policies to overcome various problems that arise in society.

Identifying a certain order of processes, such as problem investigation, goal identification, alternative design and evaluation, and decision-making, is a typical method of comprehending the process of making a policy. This perspective on policy-making is helpful in bringing some early order or organization to a complicated process. However, doing so runs the risk of making policy appear mechanical and under the direction of a single,

controlling mind, which is obviously untrue in real life. The intricacy of the policy-making process and the various methods in which policies are formed are not sufficiently conveyed (Mutiarin dkk, 2017).

METHODS

Researchers use a descriptive empirical research model with a qualitative approach. The term empirical research uses field data. Empirical research is research that explores (exploratory), describes (descriptive), and explains (explanator). The research location is at the Sukoharjo Regency National Population and Family Planning Agency (BKKBN) Office. The research analysis units are individuals, groups, organizations, objects, regions, and time, which are adjusted to the research focus. Researchers use individual and organizational analyses. Data collection techniques use interviews, documentation, and observation to obtain research data.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Stunting is a chronic malnutrition problem caused by a lack of nutritional intake over a long period of time, which can result in impaired physical growth in children whose height is lower or shorter than their age standard, affecting the development of brain tissue and intelligence, thereby impacting the quality of human resources. Handling of stunting problems must be carried out in a complete, comprehensive, integrated, and multi-sectoral manner by intensifying assistance to families who are at risk of giving birth to babies at risk of stunting.

For a country, stunting is a serious problem. Stunting is a population problem that will result in serious problems with the quality of human resources. In fact, human resources for a country are an important asset for national development. Therefore, Indonesia continues to strive to overcome the stunting problem by utilizing the various regional instruments it has. In Indonesia, there is a population agency that is also tasked with overcoming stunting in various regions, namely the Population and Family Planning Agency (BKKBN).

Various regions can rely on BKKBN to ensure population problems, such as stunting. In Sukoharjo Regency, the local government is also tackling stunting by relying on the role of the BKKBN. Optimizing the role of the Sukoharjo Regency BKKBN is carried out with a number of efforts to deal with stunting. This includes sending family cadres to socialize about gynecological health with prospective brides and grooms. Each family companion team contains three people, namely health workers, rural community institution (IMP) cadres, and PKK team members.

The Sukoharjo Regency Government has also strengthened its commitment to tackle stunting with regulations in the form of the issuance of Sukoharjo Regent Regulation Number 8 of 2020 concerning stunting prevention in Sukoharjo Regency. This is a form of facilitation in the field of regulation by the regional government of Sukoharjo Regency in handling stunting. Under this legal umbrella, the government is also implementing several other strategies, namely optimizing the role of Posyandu, which is closely related to the lives of

residents in each region. Posyandu can play a role as an education center, information center, and distribution center (for additional vitamins and nutritious foods and drinks) for parents and their toddlers, where funding is charged to the APBD and even the Village Fund.

The BKKBN is also supported by the existence of the Population Control, Family Planning, Women's Empowerment, and Child Protection Service (DPPKBP3A). The main task of DPPKBP3A is to assist the Regent in carrying out government affairs in the fields of population control, family planning, and women's empowerment and child protection in Sukoharjo Regency. This includes handling stunting.

The vision of the Department of Population Control, Family Planning, Women's Empowerment, and Child Protection, or DPPKBP3A, is "Small, Happy, Prosperous Families that are Independent and Quality, Through Family Planning for Gender Equality and Justice as well as Child Welfare and Protection." The regulations that form the basis of DPPKBP3A Sukoharjo Regency are technically based on Regent Regulation Number 8 of 2020 concerning stunting prevention in Sukoharjo Regency. This is a guideline for overcoming stunting through every policy program.

The technical regulations used by DPPKBP3A in handling stunting are Regent's Regulation Number 8 of 2020 concerning stunting prevention in Sukoharjo Regency. This Regent's Regulation is a response to Central Java Governor's Regulation Number 34 of 2019 concerning the acceleration of stunting prevention in Central Java Province. The Regional Government is carrying out convergence actions for stunting prevention in Sukoharjo Regency.

The provisions in article 4 paragraph 1 of Regent's Regulation Number 8 of 2020 concerning stunting prevention in Sukoharjo Regency, are implemented through eight stunting prevention convergence actions which include:

- a. Situation analysis of the stunting reduction program;
- b. Preparation of activity plans;
- c. Stunting consultation;
- d. Preparation of Village Regulations;
- e. Development of Human Development Cadres;
- f. Stunting data management system;
- g. Measurement and publication of Stunting; And
- h. Annual performance review.

In terms of regulations, this regent's regulation specifically refers to interventions that can be carried out by local governments to reduce stunting rates. Through various forms of activities such as Stunting Discussion, Socialization of Village Regulations on Stunting, Assistance to Human Development Cadres, Compilation of Stunting data, and mentoring programs for communities at risk of stunting.

Handling of stunting in Sukoharjo Regency is also guided by national level regulations, namely the Presidential Regulation of the Republic of Indonesia Number 72 of 2021 concerning the Acceleration of Reducing Stunting. This regulation lays down the pillars in the National Strategy for Accelerating Stunting Reduction, including:

- a. Increasing leadership commitment and vision in ministries/institutions, provincial regional governments, city district regional governments and village governments;
- b. Increasing communication on behavior change and community empowerment;
- c. Increasing the convergence of Specific Interventions and Sensitive Interventions in ministries/agencies, provincial Regional Governments, district/city Regional Governments, and Village Governments;
- d. Increasing food and nutritional security at the individual, family and community levels; and
- e. Strengthening and developing systems, data, information, research and innovation.

From these various targets, various efforts to overcome stunting were implemented in various regions in Indonesia, including in Sukoharjo Regency. From these national regulations also emerged the implementation of handling stunting at the regional level, by implementing the National Action Plan which consists of priority activities including:

- a. Providing data on families at risk of stunting;
- b. Assistance to families at risk of stunting;
- c. Assistance to all prospective brides and grooms or prospective couples of childbearing age (PUS);
- d. Survey of families at risk of stunting; and
- e. Stunting case audit.

The stunting data management system is carried out as an effort to manage data at the village or sub-district level in stages up to the regional level to support the implementation of convergence actions. The flagship program carried out to reduce stunting rates in Sukoharjo Regency is Rembug Stunting. Regarding the role of dynamists, the Sukoharjo Regency stunting discussion is the first in Indonesia, as this is recognized and appreciated by the BKKBN. One of the leading sector policies of this program is DPPKBP3A Sukoharjo Regency.

In a press statement on May 3, 2023, all levels said, "This Stunting Festival Rembug is the first in Central Java and is being held in Sukoharjo Regency, involving cross-OPDs working together to prevent and reduce stunting rates in Sukoharjo Regency, with the hope that it can become a national pilot project, said the Regent. The Rembug Stunting Festival is packaged as a momentum to strengthen an integrated pattern between components, between the central government, regional government, and third parties (private sector, business world, professions, and universities), as well as with the community directly.

The Regional Apparatus Organization (OPD) of the Sukoharjo Regency Government is actively involved in the series of stunting discussion festival activities. Then private elements, through various companies and foundations, also joined and contributed to the event. There are various types of interesting activities at the festival, ranging from health and parenting talk shows, educational competitions for children, traditional arts performances by various

schools, health checks and consultations, to the selection of Genre Ambassadors (Planned Generation).

Family assistance is one of the strategies to accelerate the reduction of stunting, which focuses on starting from the teenage period and prospective brides and grooms, during pregnancy, and in the postpartum period until the child is 5 years old. DPPKBP3A facilitates various programs to reduce stunting rates, including priority role interventions in the 2023 budget with a figure of \$40 billion, Healthy Kitchens to Overcome Stunting (DAHSAT), programs through family planning villages, and providing smart pills and beautiful pills. The various facilitation roles of DPPKBP3A are preventive steps in tackling stunting in Sukoharjo Regency.

The Sukoharjo Regency Government, in handling stunting, formed the Healthy Kitchen for Overcoming Stunting (DAHSAT), involving DPPKBP3A. The DAHSAT program is a community empowerment activity in an effort to provide balanced nutrition for families at risk of stunting who have prospective brides, pregnant mothers, breastfeeding mothers, and stunted toddlers or toddlers, especially from underprivileged families. DAHSAT's activities include education on improving nutrition and food consumption for pregnant women, breastfeeding mothers, and toddlers.

This program covers all sub-districts in Sukoharjo district. It is hoped that the DAHSAT Program in Sukoharjo Regency can play a greater role in reducing the stunting rate in Sukoharjo Regency. DAHSAT aims to provide food and nutrition to the community to avoid stunting. The KB Village Program aims to facilitate families in planning healthy and stunt-free offspring. Smart Pills and Beautiful Pills are medical interventions for the health of people at risk of stunting.

The Family Development, Population, and Family Planning Program, abbreviated as *Bangga Kencana*, is one of the flagship programs of the BKKBN. *Bangga Kencana* makes the family the basis for development and focuses on creating quality families. One of the family planning programs for building quality families is an effort to control the population by regulating birth spacing, increasing the age of marriage, and reducing mortality rates for infants, pregnant women, and mothers giving birth.

The government is also encouraging the Healthy Communities Movement (GERMAS) in the field of stunting prevention. GERMAS is then provided with facilities from the government, for example, in the form of a budget oriented towards financial support for each stunting reduction program. DPPKBP3A: In realizing the role of a catalyst for handling stunting, various efforts have been made, including through the Family Assistance Team (TPK), TNI Polri Collaboration in Socialization to Prevent Stunting, and the involvement of various elements in reducing stunting rates, such as midwives, cadres of mobilizers, and family empowerment, as well as family planning cadres.

Through these various catalyst roles, there is synergy in achieving stunt management in Sukoharjo Regency. This role helps monitor stunting prevention services targeting households, namely, the First 1,000 Days of Life

(HPK) of children, and at the same time plays an active role in ensuring that each target group prevents stunting from reaching remote villages and ensures that each village receives quality services.

The orientation of the role of the catalyst is that there are eight convergent stunting prevention actions, including situation analysis, activity plans, stunting consultations, regent/mayor regulations, development of beneficiary families, data management systems, stunting measurement and publication, and annual performance reviews. The Sukoharjo Regency Government, through DPPKBP3A, involves the TPK (Family Assistance Team) through the PKK in implementing programs to handle and reduce stunting rates. The TPK's task is to provide assistance to priority targets, including counseling, facilitation, and referral services, as well as facilitate acceptance of social assistance programs and ongoing observation to detect early risk factors for stunting.

As the spearhead in implementing the acceleration of reducing stunting, TPK has an important role as a catalyst because the assistance provided is an effort so that all specific interventions can reach the beneficiaries, which has a real impact on reducing the prevalence rate of stunting. The collaboration of each element, in this case midwives, family mobilization and empowerment cadres, and family planning cadres, is expected to be a catalyst for accelerating the reduction of stunting in Sukoharjo Regency in particular. Apart from that, DPPKBP3A involves the TNI and Polri in the program to reduce stunting rates. The catalyst role of the TNI and Polri is to provide various education and counseling on stunting prevention.

New breakthroughs in preventing and overcoming stunting, primarily through mobilizing and involving all stakeholders, TPK is at the forefront of accelerating the reduction of stunting, even though it is preventive in nature, while the handling or care of stunted toddlers is carried out by the Health Service. Therefore, his party and TPK continue to carry out stunting prevention activities, including outreach and assistance to families at risk of stunting. These various agendas are important agendas carried out in order to reduce the stunting rate in Sukoharjo Regency. The role of various lines of government, both at the central and regional levels, coupled with the participation of the community, has made a real contribution to this effort. This synergy is what is driving the success of efforts to overcome stunting.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the research above, conclusions that can be of concern in reducing stunting rates in Sukoharjo Regency include the use of technical and strategic regulations as guidelines for implementing activities related to stunting. Sukoharjo Regency has Stunting Rembug activities as a flagship program of DPPKBP3A in preventing stunting through a festival concept that includes various activities. The government also carries out budget interventions and cross-sectoral involvement in handling stunting. There is also a family planning village program and the role of the Family Assistance Team in reducing stunting rates.

The problem of stunting is closely related to the development of human resources (HR) towards the golden generation in 2045. Stunting prevention must involve cross-sectors. In this case, the Sukoharjo Regency government has made various efforts to reduce the stunting rate, by utilizing the BKKBN, and strengthening cooperation between various government lines and community participation. Both central and regional governments take an important role in efforts to reduce stunting rates. In fact, this role also extends to the village/sub-district level. Elements of society and community organizations also play a role in preventing stunting with real contributions and joint movements.

FURTHER STUDY

This research has limitations in the data collection process which focuses on the role of the government, and does not yet cover the community's response or community satisfaction with the government's efforts to overcome stunting. For this reason, further research can be carried out by expanding the lens through the community side to balance points of view.

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