

Community Empowerment to Accelerate the Reduction of Stunting Rates in Bandung City

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Abstract. Stunting among children under five years of age is one of the big problems in Indonesia. In general, stunting can be defined as a condition of chronic malnutrition, currently stunting has a fairly high prevalence in Indonesia. In Bandung City, the stunting prevalence rate in 2021 will be 26.4% with a total of 7,568 children, and in 2022 it will be 19.4% with a total of 5,660 children. The efforts made by the Bandung City Government to handle stunting cases have been quite well promoted. Even though the figure is still quite high, there has been an improvement compared to previous years. The hope of the Bandung City Government is that by 2023 the City of Bandung can further reduce the stunting rate by up to 14%. To realize community welfare, cooperation from various parties is needed, for example collaborating in handling stunting. The government has collaborated with the Food and Agriculture Service, Bandung City Health Service, and other SKPDs to implement a program that has been established by the Bandung City Government, namely the Bandung Tanginas program (Bandung Stunting Response with Safe and Healthy Food). This is an innovation program by the Bandung City Government in order to accelerate the reduction of stunting rates in Bandung City, which involves many parties, one of which is the Family Empowerment and Welfare Cadres (PKK). Making people empowered, have capacity and opportunities is important in increasing their participation in the collaborative process of reducing stunting. This research focuses on community empowerment strategies based on a case study of the participation of PKK cadres in Bandung City in handling stunting.

Keywords: Community Empowerment, Stunting, Bandung Tanginas

1 Introduction

Stunting is one of the most crucial nutritional problems, especially in developing countries such as Indonesia. Stunting is defined as a form of growth and development failure that causes linear growth disorders in toddlers due to the accumulation of nutritional deficiencies that lasts for a long time, at least in the first 1000 days of life [1]. Malnutrition during early childhood growth and development can hinder physical and mental development, and can even cause death. Stunted children are at risk of intellectual decline, decreased productivity, and may be at risk of experiencing degenerative diseases in the future. Referring to the World Health Organization, stunting can cause suboptimal cognitive, motor, and verbal development as well

as an increased risk of obesity and other degenerative diseases. This can lead to an increase in the incidence of morbidity and mortality [2].

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) addresses the most pressing global issues: 17 goals. Stunting is one of the targets of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which is included in the second sustainable development goal, namely eliminating hunger and all forms of malnutrition by 2030 and achieving food security [3].

The city of Bandung, as one of the development centers in West Java, faces significant challenges related to the prevalence of stunting among children. In recent years, data shows an increase in the number of stunting cases in Bandung City, underscoring the urgency to take concrete steps to tackle this problem. In Bandung City, the stunting prevalence rate in 2021 will be 26.4% with a total of 7,568 children, and in 2022 it will be 19.4% with a total of 5,660 children. The geographical, demographic and socio-economic conditions of Bandung City also influence the high prevalence of stunting. Factors such as access to nutritious food, proper sanitation and adequate health services are key elements that influence the nutritional status of children in the Bandung City [4]. In facing this problem, the participation of all parties, from local governments to the general public, is crucial to ensure effective and sustainable stunting prevention efforts.

Stunting also has significant long-term implications for human development in the city of Bandung. The impacts are not just limited to children's physical health, but also include reduced academic performance, economic productivity in adulthood, and potentially perpetuating the cycle of poverty. Therefore, handling stunting is not only the responsibility of the health sector, but also requires a comprehensive cross-sectoral approach.

Local government as the key actor to ensure SDGs achievements in national level [5]. In Indonesia, the role of local government is even bigger as the country applies local government autonomy. In order to reduce the prevalence of stunting and improve public health, this is done through specific interventions and sensitive interventions. If specific interventions are mostly related to the health sector, sensitive interventions are efforts to reduce stunting rates through collaboration with various parties who have responsibilities and interests in realizing community welfare. Realizing community welfare requires cooperation from various parties to make collaborative efforts in handling stunting [6]. The efforts made by the Bandung City Government to handle stunting cases have been quite well promoted.

Even though the City of Bandung has made various efforts to overcome stunting, this complex and multifactorial challenge requires a coordinated and integrated strategy. Concrete steps, such as nutrition education campaigns, strengthening the public health system, and empowering families in practicing healthy eating patterns, are some of the many steps that can be taken to reduce the prevalence of stunting in the city of Bandung. With collaboration and shared commitment from all stakeholders, the City of Bandung can change its direction towards a healthier and more sustainable future for future generations.

The government has collaborated with the Food and Agriculture Service, Bandung City Health Service, and other to implement programs that have been established by the Bandung City Government, namely through promoting the Bandung Tanginas. Bandung Tanginas is an innovation program of the Bandung City Government in order to accelerate the reduction of stunting rates in the Bandung City. The implementation of this program was due to the government's concern, especially the Bandung City Government, regarding the increasing number of toddlers experiencing stunting and the lack of knowledge among the people of Bandung City about the negative impacts of stunting.

Additionally, the Bandung City Government recognizes the multifaceted nature of stunting and its implications beyond just health, acknowledging its effects on education, productivity,

and overall socio-economic development. Thus, efforts to combat stunting extend beyond the realm of healthcare, encompassing holistic approaches that address underlying socio-economic determinants. This holistic approach involves initiatives such as improving access to clean water and sanitation, enhancing maternal and child care services, and promoting livelihood opportunities for vulnerable communities, all of which contribute to creating an enabling environment for healthy child development [7].

Moreover, the success of stunting prevention efforts in Bandung City hinges upon robust monitoring, evaluation, and data-driven decision-making processes. By employing rigorous monitoring mechanisms and leveraging data to assess the effectiveness of interventions, the government can adapt strategies in real-time to ensure maximum impact. This data-driven approach also facilitates transparency and accountability, enabling stakeholders to track progress, identify gaps, and allocate resources efficiently. Through a combination of comprehensive interventions, community engagement, and evidence-based policymaking, Bandung City is poised to make significant strides in reducing stunting prevalence and advancing the broader agenda of sustainable development.

Based on the background described previously, we can see that the Bandung City Government has taken the stunting problem in Bandung seriously, but the stunting rate in Bandung City is still quite high. Communities that should play an important role in the collaboration process are limited by a lack of knowledge and power to determine their own affairs and develop initiatives to participate. Based on the identification of problems in the collaborative process of reducing stunting at the city level, this research focuses on the less than optimal role and participation of the community. Even though there are other stakeholders who also have significance in collaborating to handle stunting, the community is one of the main actors because the role of the community is very important. How does Bandung City, an autonomic city in West Java, implementing community empowerment to overcome the problem of stunting?

Stunting continues to pose a significant challenge to public health worldwide, especially in developing nations such as Indonesia. In Bandung City, efforts to combat stunting have gained momentum through community empowerment strategies, with PKK (Family Welfare Empowerment) cadres assuming a central position. This article examines community empowerment efforts, highlighting the important role played by PKK cadres in overcoming stunting in the Bandung City.

2 Method

This study employs descriptive research methodologies employing a qualitative framework, aiming to provide a detailed and comprehensive understanding of stunting management. The research utilizes various data collection methods, including in-depth interviews, observations, and documentation. In-depth interviews are conducted to gather detailed insights from respondents on the research topic, while observations capture behavioral patterns and social interactions not easily discerned through interviews. Documentation serves to supplement data collection by incorporating relevant information from pertinent documents. Data analysis follows the methodology, involving data reduction, presentation, and verification. Data reduction streamlines information into manageable units for effective processing, followed by organized data presentation to facilitate systematic analysis. Finally, conclusions or verification processes are undertaken to evaluate hypotheses derived from the collected data.

3 Result

Stunting, defined as impaired growth and development due to chronic malnutrition, poses significant challenges to individual health and societal well-being. Its impact extends beyond physical stature to encompass cognitive development, educational achievement, and future economic productivity. In Bandung City, the prevalence of stunting serves as a stark reminder of the imperative need for impactful interventions.

The handling carried out by the Bandung City Government to accelerate the stunting reduction rates is one of the efforts to solve problems that occur in people's lives, namely in the health sector. Meeting the needs for food, clothing and shelter are basic needs that must be met by every human being. As we know, human nutritional needs are different at each age. As people get older, their nutritional needs will change too. Toddlers aged 1-2 years are of course a period where food intake plays an important role in the process of growth and development.

At the core of Bandung City's strategy to address stunting is community empowerment. PKK cadres, serving as grassroots leaders, play a vital role in spearheading these initiatives. Empowered through training, skill development, and robust engagement, PKK cadres are well-prepared to enhance awareness, advocate for nutrition education, and facilitate healthcare access within their communities.

Bandung City, an autonomous city in West Java, implements community empowerment to address the issue of stunting through various strategies. One approach is through education and awareness campaigns aimed at promoting the importance of nutrition and healthy eating habits within the community. This includes providing information about balanced diets, proper infant and child feeding practices, and the significance of prenatal and postnatal care for mothers. Additionally, Bandung City facilitates community participation in the design and implementation of programs targeting stunting prevention. This involvement ensures that initiatives are culturally sensitive and tailored to the specific needs of local communities. Community members are encouraged to actively participate in decision-making processes, contributing ideas and insights that can enhance the effectiveness of interventions.

Through the inclusion of PKK cadres in initiatives aimed at stunting prevention, Bandung City harnesses their intimate understanding of local dynamics, cultural awareness, and community trust to enhance the effectiveness of interventions.

The efforts of Bandung City, with the active participation of PKK cadres, encompass educational drives covering essential nutrition, advocacy for breastfeeding, monitoring growth, and directing individuals to healthcare facilities for timely interventions. Remarkable achievements stem from grassroots activities like household visits, culinary showcases, and community gardening endeavors, vividly demonstrating the concrete influence of PKK cadres in curbing stunting rates.

While PKK cadres' participation presents significant opportunities, challenges such as resource constraints, logistical barriers, and socio-cultural factors persist. Overcoming these challenges requires sustained commitment from all stakeholders, including government agencies, non-governmental organizations, healthcare providers, and the community itself.

Moreover, Bandung City promotes collaboration between different stakeholders, including government agencies, non-governmental organizations, healthcare providers, and private sector entities. By fostering partnerships, the city is able to leverage resources and expertise from various sectors to implement comprehensive and sustainable solutions to combat stunting. Furthermore, Bandung City emphasizes capacity building within communities by providing training and skills development opportunities related to nutrition, health, and childcare.

This empowers individuals and community groups to take ownership of stunting prevention efforts and implement initiatives tailored to their specific contexts. Overall, Bandung City's approach to addressing stunting through community empowerment involves education, collaboration, and capacity building, with a focus on engaging and mobilizing local communities to take an active role in combating this issue.

Therefore, the Bandung City Government, through the Bandung City Health Service and the Bandung City Food and Agriculture Service, launched a program to provide additional food for toddlers in the context of efforts to deal with stunting in Bandung City. This activity is intended so that toddlers receive 4 healthy 5 perfect food intake as a form of Bandung City Government's concern for underprivileged families. The main goal of health education is so that people are able to apply their own problems and needs, are able to understand what they can do about the problem, with the resources available to them plus support from outside, and are able to decide on appropriate activities to improve the standard of healthy living, and community welfare.

The efforts made by the Bandung City Government to mandate one of the Bandung Tanginas programs are through providing education which is carried out under the guidance of the Head of the Empowerment Section in the District, the UPTD Health Center Nutrition Worker, the Chair of the TP-PKK Pokja IV Subdistrict, and the Chair of the TP-PKK Pokja IV as well as Posyandu cadres in each sub-district.

Bandung Tanginas not only aims to provide additional food for toddlers, but also to increase awareness of the importance of balanced nutrition and promote sustainable local agriculture. One of the key aspects of Bandung Tanginas is the active role of the community in implementing this program. Through active participation from families, communities and local community leaders, this program can be implemented more effectively and sustainably. With support from various parties, it is hoped that Bandung Tanginas can become a strategic step in efforts to reduce stunting rates in the city of Bandung and have a positive impact on the health and welfare of the local community.

Community participation is very necessary to support the success of the program. One of the programs from Bandung Tanginas that most requires participation from the community is the Buruan Sae program where all residents are asked to plant vegetables and medicinal plants, which is aimed at overcoming food inequality problems in the city of Bandung by utilizing existing yards or land with gardening to fulfill own family's food needs. Through this program, the Bandung City Government hopes that people can learn to produce their own food so that the food they consume can be healthier and more natural and has marketability. However, the problem experienced by the community regarding this program is that there is not enough land in each house to be used for growing plants, both medicinal plants and vegetables, because not many types of plants can be planted in pots but must be planted in the ground without using a pot. Public awareness to play an active role in every activity by expressing their ideas or thoughts is very helpful for the government, especially the sub-district government. The enthusiasm of the community in channeling aspirations to the government really helps the government understand and understand the needs of the community it leads. This also really encourages the success of the Bandung Tanginas Program in the Bandung city so that the program can be implemented well.

4 Conclusion

Through one of the Bandung Tanginas programs, namely Buruan Sae, the Bandung City Government hopes that people can learn to produce their own food so that the food they consume can be healthier and more natural and has marketability. So this can overcome the problem of food inequality in the city of Bandung. However, the problem experienced by the community regarding this program is that there is not enough land in each house to be used for planting plants, both medicinal plants and vegetables, because not many types of plants can be planted in pots but must be planted in the ground without using a pot.

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The community empowerment strategy, especially through the active involvement of PKK cadres, is quite promising in overcoming stunting in the city of Bandung. By leveraging the collective efforts of the community and stakeholders, the City of Bandung aims to create sustainable solutions that improve the health and well-being of its residents, and lay the foundation for a healthier and more prosperous future.

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