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The Role of The Health Department in Accelerating The Reduction Of Stunting in Sukabumi City

Fitri Nuraeni[1], Rizki Hegia Sampurna[2] and Andi Mulyadi[3]

[123]*Department of Public Administration, University of Muhammadiyah Sukabumi, Sukabumi, Indonesia*
**Corresponding author: fitrinuraeni2203@gmail.com*

ABSTRACT
Stunting remains an unresolved issue, with the figures in Sukabumi City continuing to rise to 26.9% in 2023, an increase of 7.7% from the previous year. This figure is far from the target set in Presidential Regulation No. 72 of 2021. This study uses a qualitative descriptive method with the roles theory of Ife and Tesoriero (2016), which includes four dimensions: facilities, education, representation, and technical support. The results show that the Health Department has carried out all four roles. In the facility dimension, supplementary food and iron tablets were provided. In the education dimension, information was disseminated through social media, integrated health service posts, cadre seminars, and toddler classes, although community participation remains low. In terms of representation dimension, the department provides budget, facilities, nutrition staff, and collaborates with the Social Service, although the distribution of food aid is not yet equitable. Meanwhile, in the technical dimension, the use of the SIGIZI KESGA site has been implemented, but it is still hindered by the low visits of the community to the integrated health service posts.

Keywords: *Role, Stunting, Health Department*

1. INTRODUCTION

Stunting is a chronic and complex public health issue that remains a major challenge in various developing countries, including Indonesia. This condition is characterized by a child's height being below the growth standard for their age, which is generally caused by long-term nutritional deficiencies, especially from pregnancy until the child is two years old, known as the First 1,000 Days of Life (HPK).

The health department plays a role in improving community welfare by addressing various health issues. In addition, the Health Department acts as the main driver in reducing stunting rates through a community-based health approach, which involves direct interventions in the field, policy development, and collaboration across sectors. This effort requires alignment between regional, central governments, and the community to create an environment that supports the improvement of nutrition and health status for mothers and children.

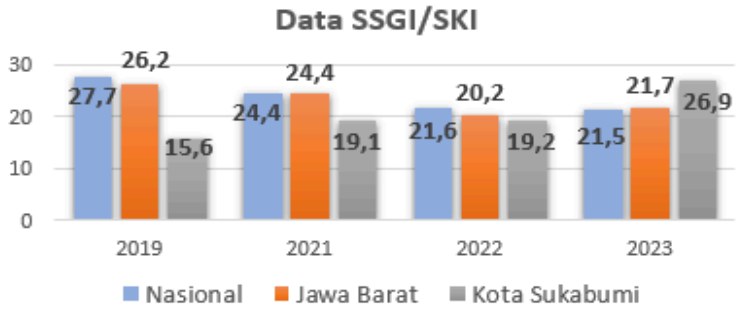

Figure 1. Stunting Prevalence Rate From 2019-2023

The data above shows that the stunting rate in Sukabumi City has increased every year, peaking in 2023 at 26.9%, up 7.7% from the previous year. Meanwhile, the Presidential Regulation of the Republic of Indonesia Number 72 of 2021, Article 5 sets a national target for stunting prevalence at 14% by 2024. Therefore, the stunting rate at the district/city level should be reduced to achieve this national target.

Therefore, efforts for handling and prevention by the government are needed so that cases of stunting in Sukabumi city can be reduced. The Health Department holds a very important position in the issue of stunting because it is responsible for addressing local government affairs in the field of health. The government is responsible for setting adequate nutrition standards, nutrition service standards, and nutrition workforce standards at various service levels. The government is responsible for meeting the food needs of poor households and is responsible in emergencies. The government also has the responsibility to educate and provide information to its citizens about nutrition.

This study aims to analyze the role of the Sukabumi City Health Department in accelerating the reduction of stunting through the approach of four dimensions of organizational roles according to Ife and Tesoriero, namely facilitation, education, representation, and technical roles. It is hoped that this research can contribute to strengthening public health policies and practices at the local level.

As a solution to the high rate of stunting in Sukabumi City, there needs to be an increase in nutritional education for the community through the implementation of a structured and sustainable integrated outreach program. This program is designed to involve various key elements at the community level, such as integrated health posts cadres and health workers, at the forefront in delivering information. Moreover, the massive utilization of digital media has also become a main strategy to expand the reach of education, raise public awareness about the importance of balanced nutrition, and encourage behavioral changes in parenting and family food consumption patterns, especially during the First 1,000 Days of Life (HPK).

Norsanti's (2021) research assesses the effectiveness of the stunting reduction program at the village level, focusing on the role of cadres and family support. However, the strategic

role of the Health Office in strengthening policies and cross-sector coordination has not been discussed in depth. This study fills that gap by examining the role of the Health Office of Sukabumi City using the role theory approach of Ife and Tesoriero (2016), thus contributing from the institutional perspective at the city level.

Seeing the issues above, the researcher is interested in conducting deeper research on this problem: What is the role of the health department in accelerating the reduction of stunting in Sukabumi city?

2. METHODS

This study uses a descriptive qualitative approach to obtain an in-depth understanding of the role of the Sukabumi City Health Department in accelerating the reduction of stunting. This type of research is used to analyze social occurrences, phenomena, or conditions. The data is generated from written and verbal sources, as well as the perspectives being observed. Data collection techniques are conducted through in-depth interviews with informants from the HealthDepartment, UPTD Public Health Centers, and integrated health posts cadres, as well as field observations and documentation.

The data obtained was analyzed using the interactive analysis model from Miles and Huberman, which includes data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. The validity of the data was tested through source, technique, and time triangulation. The analysis indicators are based on the role theory of Jim Ife and Frank Tesoriero (2016), which consists of four dimensions: facilitation, education, representation, and technical.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

According to Jim Ife and Frank Tesoriero (2016), Role is defined as various forms of responsibilities and functions performed by individuals and institutions in social and organizational contexts, aimed at creating positive social change and empowering communities. Role not only reflects the execution of formal duties but also includes active contributions in promoting sustainable social transformation through direct engagement with the community.

At this stage of the research findings, the researcher will describe the results of the interviews that have been conducted with the informants based on the role theory according to Jim Ife and Frank Tesoriero (2016), which has 4 dimensions: the role of facilities, the role of education, the role of representation, and the role of technical aspects. Analysis can be understood as a step in elaborating on a problem from each of its parts and examining it to gain an accurate understanding and the overall meaning of the issue.

3.1 The Role of Facilities

Facilities can be defined as all forms of means, infrastructure, services, and resources provided by specific institutions or organizations to support the fulfillment of the basic needs of society and to encourage improvements in the quality of life. According to Jim Ife and Frank Tesoriero (2016), the existence of these facilities is an important part of the community

empowerment process, especially in the context of community-based social development. In the framework of preventing and reducing stunting in Sukabumi City, the role of facilities is manifested through the provision of various forms of support that are promotional, preventive, and direct interventions, such as health cadre training programs, nutritional counseling, and periodic child growth monitoring activities.

Figure 2. Provision of Iron Supplement Tablets for Adolescent Girls

The image above shows the activity of providing iron supplement tablets (TTD) to adolescent girls, conducted by the community health center as a tangible form of preventive support in efforts to accelerate the reduction of stunting in the future. This program not only focuses on curative aspects but also reflects a promotive and educational approach targeting strategic groups, namely adolescent girls as future mothers.

The dimensional role of facilities in the Health Service's role in accelerating the reduction of stunting. In its implementation, the Health Service of Sukabumi City, through community health centers as technical implementing units, has carried out its role in accelerating the reduction of stunting, which includes motivating the community regarding efforts undertaken both in handling and prevention. In addition, in the aspect of support for accelerating the reduction of stunting, community health centers implement supplementary feeding programs, provide iron tablets to adolescent girls to prevent future stunting, and provide Vitamin A through integrated health posts for toddlers. However, the success of the program also heavily depends on the active role of parents in regulating dietary patterns and ensuring the adequacy of children's nutritional intake at home, considering that Supplementary Feeding (PMT) serves only as a complement, not as the main source of nutritional fulfillment.

3.2 The Role of Education

The educational role is a crucial aspect needed by all layers of society, especially for pregnant women and parents with toddlers. In the context of accelerating the reduction of stunting rates in Sukabumi City, the Health Department has a strategic responsibility to educate the community. This educational effort is not limited to the conveyance of information but also includes raising public awareness, training individuals and groups, as well as strengthening community capacity, as explained by Jim Ife and Frank Tesoriero (2016) in a community-based development approach.

The research results indicate that the implementation of training in the form of toddler classes by the community health center has become an educational effort to enhance parents' knowledge regarding stunting prevention. This program is fundamentally designed to empower the community by improving parents' capacity to provide proper nutrition and health care for toddlers.

Figure 3. Implementation of "Kelas Balita"

The image above illustrates the implementation of the toddler class program as one of the efforts to accelerate the reduction of stunting, which is a form of training provided to the community to enhance knowledge related to parenting and stunting prevention. However, the realization of the program in the field has not been optimal due to existing disparities in access to training within the community. Therefore, the effectiveness of the toddler class program largely depends on equal access, the sustainability of the training, and adequate resource support. Without these, this educational effort has not been able to reach all targets fairly and comprehensively, which could ultimately hinder the overarching goal of accelerating the reduction of stunting rates at the community level.

However, the implementation of this educational role still faces several obstacles. Among them are the inconsistent delivery of information through social media, limited outreach of information to those without access to social media, budget constraints in organizing seminars for integrated health posts cadres, and a lack of community participation in Toddler Classes, making the effectiveness of the program not optimal.

3.3 The Role of Representation

The role of representation refers to the function as a representative of the interests of the community, where health institutions, in this case, the Health Department, act as a bridge between the needs of the community and external parties that can provide support. In this context, the role of representation is not only limited to conveying the aspirations or needs of the community, but also includes initiating strategic collaborations and forming partnership networks that can provide concrete benefits for improving public health. The Sukabumi City Health Department carries out this representative role through cooperation with various agencies, organizations, and other stakeholders. This collaboration is aimed at garnering

broader support in accelerating the reduction of stunting rates. This support can take the form of resources, technical expertise, program innovations, and institutional strengthening at the community level. This dimension of representation plays a crucial role in expanding the scope of health interventions, opening access to cross-sector resources, and creating synergies in efforts to realize a healthy, self-sufficient, and prosperous society.

Efforts to accelerate the reduction of stunting cannot be carried out by just one sector alone, but require active involvement from various parties. The ability of the Health Department to establish a strong working network reflects the maturity of the representative role it plays. The Health Department collaborates with the Social Office in efforts to accelerate the reduction of stunting, with the Health Office, community health centers, and the Social Office participating in programs that assist in staple food supplies to families at risk of stunting, which is a concrete manifestation of cross-sectoral networking strategies. This program aims to strengthen family food security and improve the nutritional intake of toddlers through direct interventions based on targeted data.

Figure 4. Provision of Staple Food Ingredients

The picture is documentation of the additional food provision program aimed at communities with children who have stunting nutritional status or are at risk of experiencing stunting. This program is the result of collaboration between the community health center and the social services office as part of a collaborative strategy to accelerate the reduction of stunting rates. This activity aims to improve the nutritional intake of families, especially for children who are in critical growth periods, through the provision of nutritious staple foods.

This reflects the presence of institutional awareness to integrate a collaborative approach in accelerating the reduction of stunting rates in Sukabumi City. However, the effectiveness of the implementation of this program in the field cannot be said to be optimal. There are still several significant obstacles, particularly in the aspects of information dissemination and aid distribution. This indicates that cross-sector cooperation has been established, but in its implementation has not been able to reach the community evenly and accurately. This imbalance may affect the low effectiveness of the program in efforts to accelerate the reduction of stunting. In the dimension of this representation role, especially in the aspect of cooperation, its implementation is considered not optimal. This is caused by obstacles in the

process of information dissemination and aid distribution to the target community, which impacts the effectiveness of the cooperation program.

3.4 The Role of Technical Aspects

The technical role dimension put forward by Jim Ife and Frank Tesoriero (2016) is one of the important dimensions in the community empowerment process. From their perspective, the technical role includes the ability to apply professional skills and practical approaches based on the actual needs of the community. In this regard, the Health Department acts as a facilitator of social development that combines scientific approaches, technology, and professional competencies to create a positive impact on the community, particularly in terms of improving children's nutritional status.

In this dimension, the Health Department of Sukabumi City has an important responsibility related to the capability of human resources, especially the office staff, in collecting accurate data and utilizing information technology to support evidence-based interventions. Mastery of technological tools, such as computers and health program support applications, becomes a fundamental aspect in supporting the effectiveness of programs aimed at accelerating the reduction of stunting.

The Health Department utilizes a digital-based information system provided by the Ministry of Health, namely SIGIZI KESGA, as the main tool in monitoring the development of the stunting reduction program. This system functions as a reporting and data management medium related to the nutritional status of toddlers and pregnant women. Through this platform, health workers can input data from periodic monitoring, which is then automatically stored and can be accessed by relevant parties quickly and efficiently. The existence of this system not only simplifies the recording and reporting process but also allows for real-time monitoring of the community's nutritional conditions in each respective work area. The use of SIGIZI KESGA reflects a strategic step in the digitization of health services and strengthens the functions of supervision and data-driven decision-making. Thus, this information system plays an important role in supporting the effectiveness of the implementation of the stunting reduction program in a structured and measurable manner.

The research results indicate that although the utilization of information technology such as SIGIZI KESGA has been implemented by the Health Department of Sukabumi City as a modern and systematic approach to monitor children's nutritional status, the success of this system still heavily relies on active community participation, especially in visiting the integrated health posts (integrated health service post). SIGIZI KESGA, as a digital platform, functions well in collecting and analyzing data on the nutritional status of infants and toddlers automatically. However, the effectiveness of this system is disrupted when the necessary data cannot be comprehensively collected due to the children's absence from integrated health posts activities. Information from informants indicates that one of the main constraints is the low community participation, which is generally caused by scheduling conflicts with other activities and a lack of awareness of the importance of the integrated health posts role in monitoring children's growth and development. This condition reflects a gap between the availability of advanced technology systems and the social readiness of society to utilize them optimally.

The dimension of the technical role of the Health Department in accelerating the reduction of stunting, in its implementation, the community health center, together with integrated health posts in the working area of Tipar Health Center, has utilized technology to monitor the nutritional status of toddlers, particularly through the SIGIZI KESGA platform. However, implementation still faces challenges, especially due to the low level of community visits to integrated health posts. This situation complicates the monitoring process of child growth and development as well as data input into the system, making online reporting and nutritional status monitoring not yet optimal.

4. CONCLUSION

The Sukabumi City Health Department has played a strategic and directed role in efforts to accelerate the reduction of stunting. This role encompasses the dimensions of facilities, education, representation, and technical aspects, as analyzed based on the role theory of Jim Ife and Frank Tesoriero (2016). In terms of facilities, the HealthDepartment, through community health centers and integrated health services posts, has provided promotive and preventive services, such as motivation, counseling, as well as the Supplementary Feeding Program (PMT) and distribution of Iron Tablets (TTD). In the educational dimension, the office implements information and training programs for both integrated health service cadres and the general public through various media, such as integrated health service activities, seminars, toddler classes, and social media. In addition, in the dimension of representation, the Health Department demonstrates its commitment by providing resources in the form of funding, facilities such as anthropometric kits, and nutrition implementers in every Community Health Center (Puskesmas). The office also builds cross-sector cooperation, especially with the Social Service, in the form of basic food assistance programs. However, the implementation of this cooperation still faces challenges in terms of distribution and information dissemination. Meanwhile, in the technical dimension, the Health Department utilizes information technology such as the SIGIZI KESGA application to monitor nutritional status and support data-driven decision-making processes. Overall, the role of the Health Department in accelerating the reduction of stunting in Sukabumi City has been carried out quite well, covering the aspects of planning, implementation, and program evaluation. Although still facing challenges such as budget constraints, low community participation, and cross-sector collaboration challenges, the efforts being made show a positive direction. Strengthening coordination, funding, and community involvement is necessary for these roles to become more optimal and sustainable. Future research is recommended to explore the effectiveness and challenges of implementing digital platforms such as SIGIZI KESGA to further assess the extent to which the information system can support the accurate and timely collection, reporting, and monitoring of nutritional data. The research could also highlight technical barriers, such as limitations in infrastructure and the digital competencies of healthcare personnel.

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