

Empowering Village Communities Through Mutual Cooperation Mobilization Agents in Kalimontang Village in Overcoming Stunting

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Abstract:

Stunting is a world problem because of its implications for determining the future of the nation. Indonesia, as a developing country, still has a high stunting prevalence rate. Based on data from the 2022 National Nutrition Status Survey (SSGI), the prevalence of stunting in Indonesia is 21.6%. This figure is still more than the target figure set by the World Health Organization (WHO), the stunting rate should be no more than 20%. There were obstacles in implementing the stunting reduction target, one of which was a lack of important intake such as animal protein and vegetable protein. This research was conducted with the aim of analyzing stunting prevention by empowering village communities through mutual cooperation agents in Kalimantong Village, West Sumbawa Regency. The research method uses a descriptive qualitative approach. The research results show that Kalimantong Village has a relatively low prevalence rate compared to other villages in Brang Ene District, West Sumbawa Regency. Therefore, to support the target of reducing stunting, human empowerment is needed through mutual cooperation agents to prevent stunting and increase human resources in Indonesia.

Keywords: mutual cooperation; mobilization agent; empowerment; village community; stunting

1. Introduction

Community Empowerment is an effort to develop community potential and abilities. Community empowerment can also be interpreted as an effort to increase community growth and development so as to create a quality society (Indrajaya, 2021). The quality of existing society is determined by how well the government services its citizens. One type of service that determines the quality of the community is health services. The level of public health can be seen from the condition of the surrounding community. The health problem that is currently the government's focus is the problem of stunting which often occurs in children (Silpia, 2019).

Stunting is a disruption in the growth and development of children due to chronic malnutrition and recurrent infections, which is characterized by their length or height being below standard. Most people may not understand the term stunting (Hildagardis, 2019). Stunting can also be interpreted as a chronic malnutrition problem caused by a lack of nutritional intake over a long period of time, resulting in growth disorders in children, namely the child's height is lower or shorter (stunted) than the age standard. Stunting usually begins to appear in children aged two years (Dan, 2020).

The condition of a child's short body is often said to be a hereditary (genetic) factor from both parents, so that many people just accept it without doing anything to prevent it (Wati, 2020) (Wulandari, 2021). In fact, as we know, genetics is a determinant of health that has the least influence when compared to behavioral, environmental factors (social, economic, cultural, political), and health services. In other words, stunting is a problem that can actually be prevented (Ketut, 2017).

The Ministry of Health emphasizes that stunting is a major threat to the quality of Indonesian society. Not only does it interfere with physical growth, but it also causes children to experience brain development disorders which will affect their abilities and achievements. Therefore, the government is currently launching various programs in the field of health services to prevent and overcome stunting in Indonesia.

This aims to ensure that children in Indonesia can grow and develop normally and optimally.

West Sumbawa Regency is one of the districts that has a number of children who experience stunting. One of the stunting cases that occurred in West Sumbawa Regency occurred in Kalimantong Village, Brang Ene District. The local government has made empowerment efforts to overcome cases that occurred in the village. The government is making these efforts through assistance from mutual cooperation agents in West Sumbawa Regency.

Empowerment in overcoming stunting in Kalimantong Village is carried out by the Community and Village Empowerment Service together with mutual cooperation agents. This activity was carried out by the Community Institutional, Social, Cultural and Mutual Cooperation Empowerment Division in the service. In this case, the relevant government needs strategies and concepts that are acceptable and attract the attention of the public so that the efforts to be implemented by the government can run and be successful (Khaeroh, 2019)(Rafika, 2019). This happens because there are still characteristics of society that still adhere to regionalism and the culture of village communities which still find it difficult to cooperate with the government. It cannot be denied that one of the keys to the success of an effort is determined by the seriousness of both parties, namely the government as the subject and society as the object in overcoming the problem that is being focused on being addressed. Apart from strategic steps and concepts, infrastructure and financial support are also supporting factors in the success of the government's efforts to overcome stunting.

2. Research Method

This research uses qualitative research methods. An important first step is to identify relevant research locations according to the research focus, such as the West Sumbawa Regency Village Community Empowerment Service or other agencies that have business in empowering communities and villages. Next, namely assessment and preparation before starting research for successful implementation. At this stage, it is necessary to carry out an assessment with the research location, namely at the Village Community Empowerment Service Office, placed in each department of the service, namely the Secretariat, Community Economic Empowerment and Appropriate Technology, Village Government, Participation Development and Community Socio-Cultural Life.

During the implementation of the research, there were several activity processes carried out every day, with intensive time, namely Monday – Friday with working hours from 07.30 WITA – 16.00 WITA. Through active participation in every routine activity in each field and field activities, this is an important step that must be taken to be able to learn directly from the experience gained in a real work environment.

Furthermore, data collection is an important step in conducting research. During the research, we were able to collect relevant data regarding villages and sub-districts in West Sumbawa Regency. The data collected includes stunting data in each village in West Sumbawa Regency. Collecting accurate and comprehensive stunting data will support deeper analysis and evaluation of stunting prevention in Kalimantong Village.

Apart from that, what we are doing to prevent stunting is carrying out stunting prevention outreach at one of the posyandu in Kalimantong Village. The first step in implementing this special program was to find out first about the data on stunting children in Kalimantong Village. There are 13 stunted children in Kalimantong Village, with 10 children at Posyandu Mawar Putih I and 3 children at Posyandu Mawar Putih II. Based on this data, we chose Posyandu Mawar Putih I as the place to carry out stunting prevention outreach.

Next, we analyze what causes stunting in children. One of them is the lack of optimal nutritional intake for children. Therefore, apart from socialization, we are distributing healthy food to children at Posyandu Mawar Putih I, which is expected to help prevent stunting and children's growth and development.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1 General Program (Village Competition)

In realizing Good Governance, especially at the village and sub-district levels, we are required to be able to manage good governance, starting from government management that upholds transparency, accountability, responsibility, independence and equality/fairness and adheres firmly to applicable rules and procedures so that impact on the development of economic and social growth.

The 2023 West Nusa Tenggara Province Village and Subdistrict Competitions will be carried out in a directed, coordinated, integrated manner and are a technical elaboration of the Minister of Home Affairs Regulation Number 81 of 2015 concerning Evaluation of Village and Subdistrict Development as outlined in the Implementation Guidelines for Java Province Village/Subdistrict Competitions East 2023. Implementation of village and sub-district competition activities is carried out by the local regional government under the auspices of the Community and Village Empowerment Service (DPMD) through the Village Government Sector.

The village and sub-district competition that is being held is a competition that aims to evaluate the level of development of villages and sub-districts covering the areas of government, regionalism and society by comparing data or conditions of villages and sub-districts for the last two years, village and sub-district profile data as well as Medium Term Development Plan documents. Village (RPJMD) and sub-district planning documents. Apart from that, to increase motivation for village and sub-district governments in administering government and encourage the growing spirit of empowerment of village and sub-district communities. The following are the indicators for each assessment field: **1) Government Sector:** a. Subdistrict Government, b. Performance, c. Initiative and creativity in community empowerment, d. Technology-based villages and sub-districts (E-Government), e. Preservation of customs and culture; **2) Regional Sector:** a. Village and sub-district identity, b. Boundaries, c. Innovation, d. Disaster response and preparedness, e. Investment arrangements; **3) Community Sector:** a. Community Participation, b. Community institutions, c. Family Welfare Empowerment (PKK), d. Security and Order, e. Education, f. Health, g. Economics, p. Poverty alleviation, i. Increasing community capacity.

This village and sub-district competition is a continuation of the district level competition which was held on 22 – 24 May 2023. On this occasion, the designated villages and sub-districts were the first winners in the district level village competition assessment to advance to the provincial level competition as village and sub-district representatives for the West Sumbawa Regency area.

The Subdistrict Competition was attended by Menala Subdistrict and Kalimantong Village as first winners in the previous competition who then had the right to take part in subdistrict and village competitions at the West Nusa Tenggara Province level. This competition was assessed directly by the regional government of West Nusa Tenggara province which was held on June 16 2023 in Kalimantong Village and June 17 2023 in Menala Village which was accompanied directly by the West Sumbawa Regency Community and Village Empowerment Service (DPMD) through the Village Government Division in the department.

In carrying out the competition, it was mentioned that the existing flagship program was the Regional Mutual Cooperation Empowerment Program (PDPGR). The Regional Mutual Cooperation Empowerment Program, hereinafter abbreviated as PDPGR, is the provision of space and confirmation of the direction of strengthening mutual cooperation as a value and way of achieving goals which is carried out voluntarily, together and mutually helping based on the spirit of Sincerity, Honesty and Sincerity (IJS). in realizing development, community empowerment and expanding employment opportunities effectively and efficiently to accelerate poverty alleviation with the aim of realizing aspirational and collaborative accountable government. PDPGR is a tool in achieving goals through values formalized through Regional Regulations. Many things are intervened through this program, some of which are pariri and bariri programs, posyandu services, stunting, and so on.

There are several aspects that are assessed in the implementation of this provincial level village and sub-district competition, namely administrative assessment with a score percentage of 80%, assessment in field aspects with a score percentage of 15%, and an assessment at a glance from the village head of 5%.

The following are the assessment points for each aspect: **1) Administration (80%)**: a. Village and sub-district fund reports, b. Empowerment Percentage, c. MSME Empowerment Decree, d. Art Group Decree, e. Sports Group Decree, f. Security and Order Decree, g. Regional Boundary Map. **2) Field (15%)**: a. PKK Garden, b. Posyandu, c. Dasa Wisma, d. Traditional Houses, **3) At a Glance of Village Heads and Village Heads (5%)**.

3.2 Special Village Community Empowerment Program

Empowerment is a process carried out as an effort to increase the ability of people (poor, marginalized, marginalized) to become empowered by becoming independent and changing their lives for the better with the abilities they have. By obtaining opportunities or accessing the resources and services needed to improve the quality and quality of life. In other words, empowerment is enabling and making society independent. Community empowerment is an effort to increase the dignity of layers of society which in current conditions are unable to escape the trap of poverty and backwardness. Besides that, empowerment should not trap the community in a state of dependency (charity), instead empowerment should lead to a process of independence.

This is related to community empowerment in research, namely for communities affected by stunting and communities to escape from lack of knowledge about efforts to improve and reduce stunting in 2 ways, namely specific interventions and sensitive interventions. Specific intervention efforts with the practice of providing nutritious food and education regarding the nutritional values needed for stunted children. Meanwhile, the sensitive intervention efforts carried out are by providing environmental hygiene education around settlements/residences, psychosocial stimulation, cleanliness/hygiene practices, environmental sanitation and the use of health services have a large role in children's height growth.

Community empowerment in Kalimantanong Village is a process, method and effort to increase the power/strength/ability of the village community so that they can strive towards mastering knowledge, conscious attitudes, good skills or becoming an independent community and not returning to setback. Thus, people seek, try, do, create situations, or ask other parties to provide power/strength/ability without causing dependence on other parties.

Handling the stunting problem cannot be done only by the health sector but requires concern from sectors outside of health. In overcoming stunting at Posyandu Mawar Putih I Kalimantanong Village, the West Sumbawa Regency government is facilitating the Regional Mutual Cooperation Empowerment Program (PDPGR), where agents from PDPGR are distributed in each posyandu who have the function and task of channeling aspirations in fulfilling the lack of facilities that support community welfare. . The PDPGR agent at Posyandu Mawar Putih I is tasked with registering children affected by stunting and assisting in the administration process at the posyandu.

Therefore, it is considered very important to provide education about efforts to prevent stunting among toddlers. Based on this idea, this special program was implemented with the aim of educating parents, especially women (mothers, pregnant women, pre-married young women, and village cadre mothers) to prevent the emergence of stunting cases. This socialization focuses on the role of mutual cooperation empowerment agents in Kalimantanong Village in handling stunting. So, posyandu staff can coordinate with PDPGR agents in dealing with patients who come to posyandu in terms of handling stunting cases and preventing stunting cases. The targets of this program are parents located in Kalimantanong Village, PKK mothers, posyandu cadres, and posyandu staff. The reason for choosing the location was because Brang Ene District, where Kalimantanong Village is located, is an independent village but with a relatively high stunting rate in West Sumbawa Regency. From the evaluation carried out after the outreach activities were carried out, it appeared that there was an increase in the participants' cognitive knowledge about stunting and its prevention through improving diet.

Based on data for February 2023, there were 53 cases of stunting under five in Brang Ene District spread across six villages. Kalimantanong Village itself recorded 10 cases of toddlers affected by stunting. To support the reduction of stunting cases, Kalimantanong Village has a health service unit in the form of 1

Community Health Center and 2 Posyandu, one of the functions of this posyandu is to reduce stunting cases in accordance with regulations passed by the regent of West Sumbawa Regency.

The health workers in this village are midwives and health cadres. We held stunting prevention outreach with ideas:

- 1) Empowering the community, especially women (pregnant women, pre-married teenage girls, and village cadre mothers), by providing knowledge on how to prevent stunting (failure to thrive in children under five years of age).
- 2) Awareness for participants of the importance of maintaining health, especially for women before pregnancy, the pregnancy process, and after giving birth.
- 3) Provide knowledge regarding healthy eating patterns for pregnant women and children. Providing follow-up activities to find out how successful the event was.
- 4) Providing knowledge regarding environmental cleanliness which is one way to prevent stunting with sensitive interventions.

Judging from the participants' understanding of the counseling that has been delivered. The obstacles faced in the planning and implementation process of stunting prevention outreach are as follows:

- 1) Limited time in carrying out outreach, because the participants consist of parents so it is estimated that not all parents will be able to attend to take part in counseling regarding the prevention and reduction of stunting in Kalimantanong Village.
- 2) Awareness of parents to attend stunting prevention outreach activities with community empowerment is still low. Therefore, the target participants who came to the counseling did not meet the target.

4. Conclusion

The Community and Village Empowerment Service is a place to accommodate the development of community potential and abilities so as to create a quality society. The creation of quality society can be seen from how the government makes progress in an area. One of them is the implementation of Village and Subdistrict Competitions, which makes the community work together to make their environment a level more advanced than before.

One of the highlights of the competition is the number of stunted children in the village/subdistrict. In this case, the West Sumbawa district government is making efforts to reduce the stunting rate that occurs in each village/subdistrict. For this reason, the district government is mobilizing mutual cooperation agents and also the Kalimantanong village government to make every effort to overcome stunting cases that occur in Kalimantanong village.

The Community and Village Empowerment Service carries out empowerment in overcoming stunting cases. In implementing empowerment activities, the relevant department coordinates with mutual cooperation agents, where the community and village empowerment department is represented by the Community Institutions, Socio-Cultural Community and Mutual Cooperation Empowerment sector. In this case, the relevant government needs strategies and concepts that are acceptable and attract the attention of the public so that the efforts to be implemented by the government can run and be successful.

The weakness of the stunting problem is that some parents still have minimal knowledge regarding things that can trigger children to become stunted. So it is hoped that the Government will carry out activities that can increase the knowledge of parents, especially in rural areas, so that the stunting rate in West Sumbawa Regency will quickly decrease.

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