


## Empowering Communities In Efforts To Accelerate Stunting Reduction In Watusampu Village Palu City

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Article Info	ABSTRACT
<b>Keywords:</b> Stunting, Mentoring, Monitoring, Empowerment	Stunting, characterized by shorter height or length in children under five compared to their peers, has seen a decrease in Palu City from 24.7% in 2022 to 22.1% in 2023. Despite various efforts, stunting remains high in Indonesia. An effective approach is community empowerment through nutrition and health assistance for pregnant women and stunted children. This support aims to educate and help families at risk of stunting in meeting their nutritional and health needs to prevent stunting. The program involved direct visits by community members, health teams, and posyandu cadres to homes and Posyandu. Results showed increased knowledge and improvements in height and weight for stunted children and pregnant women. However, the program has not fully met its targets due to low awareness among mothers and families about healthy, balanced nutrition. Additional strategies are needed, including more intensive training and counseling, enhanced social support, and closer collaboration to boost awareness and behavior changes related to diet and health.
This is an open access article under the <a href="https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/">CC BY-NC</a> license 	<b>Corresponding Author:</b> Muhammad Sabri Syahrir Department of Occupational Safety and Health, Faculty of Public Health, Tadulako University <a href="mailto:sabrisyahrir@untad.ac.id">sabrisyahrir@untad.ac.id</a>

### INTRODUCTION

Stunting is a condition where a toddler has less length or height compared to children his age. This condition is measured by body length or height that is more than minus two standard deviations from the median child growth standard from WHO (Suarnianti, 2020). Stunted toddlers include chronic nutritional problems caused by many factors such as socio-economic conditions, maternal nutrition during pregnancy, pain in babies, lack of nutritional intake in babies, stunted toddlers will have difficulty achieving optimal physical and cognitive development (Fadilah, Tara Nur; Dinengsih, Sri; Choirunissa, 2020).

Stunting is one of the nutritional problems currently facing Indonesia, especially in the Palu City area, Central Sulawesi Province. According to the results of the Indonesian Nutrition Status Survey (SSGI) from the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Indonesia (2022), the prevalence of stunting among toddlers in Indonesia was recorded at 21.6%, a decrease of around 2.8% compared to 2021 which reached 24.4%. Meanwhile, the 2020-2024 National Medium Term Development Plan (RPJMN) targets a reduction in stunting to 14% in 2024. In Palu City, the prevalence of stunting in 2023 is 22.1%, which shows a decrease from 24.7% in 2022 (Palu City Regional Development Planning Agency (Bappeda), 2024).

In Indonesia, the prevalence of stunting is still quite high even though various efforts have been made to reduce it. One approach that is considered effective is community empowerment through nutritional and health assistance for pregnant women with KEK and stunted children. This assistance aims to provide education and support to pregnant women with Chronic Energy Deficiency (KEK) and their families in meeting nutritional and health needs, so as to prevent stunting in children (Taupik et al., 2023).

### **Purpose And Benefits**

The aim of this activity is to assess the effectiveness of community empowerment programs through providing nutritional and health assistance to pregnant women with Chronic Energy Deficiency (KEK) and stunted children. It is hoped that after this activity is carried out there will be a reduction in stunting in Watusampu Village, Palu City.

## **METHOD OF IMPLEMENTING ACTIVITIES**

The methods used in implementing this community service are the socialization method and monitoring method. Socialization methods are methods or methods used to interact with society in the form of direct and indirect communication. The forms of socialization include, for example, socialization of nutritional assistance, either with posters or direct education, while the monitoring method involves conducting health monitoring directly to stunting clowns.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

Community service activities began with socialization and data collection on lists of pregnant women with Chronic Energy Deficiency (CED) and stunted children who were accompanied by Human Development Cadres, health center nutrition staff. Before we went out into the community to provide assistance, we received training and guidance for 2 days (1 day from the head of the community health center and 1 day with the nutrition team from the community health center) to equalize perceptions and increase knowledge and attitudes regarding nutritional needs for young children.

In designing strategies to reduce the prevalence of stunting, it is important to analyze and evaluate alternative effective strategies. The strategy developed by Tadulako University in collaboration with BKKBN and the Palu City Government focuses on implementing, monitoring and evaluating the acceleration of stunting reduction in Watusampu Village, Palu City. This approach emphasizes increasing the provision of nutrition through local food, monitoring nutritional status, and treating malnutrition in children under five. A combination of short-term strategies includes optimizing specific nutritional interventions, involving the community and posyandu cadres in data collection and monitoring nutritional status, as well as empowering the community in managing nutritious food. This strategy aims to overcome posyandu weaknesses in identification and monitoring, lack of maternal awareness about providing nutrition, as well as limited access to sanitation and nutritious food for stunted children under five (Priyono, 2020).

Nutrition assistance aims to increase knowledge and practice of providing nutritious food for stunted children. This program begins with an assessment of children's nutritional

status to identify specific needs and distinguish between stunted toddlers and toddlers. Education is provided regarding balanced nutrition, food selection and processing, as well as proper feeding techniques. Furthermore, the program provides PMT such as formula milk, MPASI, and Moringa pudding, and monitors children's development periodically to evaluate and adjust interventions. Apart from that, the program also includes education on environmental cleanliness and planting trees as steps to prevent stunting.

Monitoring of children's cognitive, motor and social-emotional development is also carried out to detect developmental delays and provide medical treatment if necessary, such as for infections or diarrhea. Data from this health monitoring is used to evaluate the effectiveness of interventions and ensure that the reduction in stunting rates in Palu City is on target.



**Figure 1.** Assessment of Nutritional Status

During the implementation of the program in Watusampu Village, Palu City, there were positive developments in stunted children, as seen at Posyandu Melati 1 to Posyandu Melati 4, where people were increasingly active in bringing their children for weighing and measuring. Previously there was one child who only ate Promina biscuits, but now he is following the nutritional recommendations given. This shows that this assistance has increased public awareness about providing proper nutrition and made a significant contribution to reducing stunting in Palu City. The next step is to develop innovative programs to further increase community independence and achieve a healthy and high-quality generation.

## CONCLUSIONS

This program was implemented for 26 days in Watusampu Village, Palu City, with various activities including nutrition education, health education, and food product interventions. During its implementation, child health monitoring is carried out, including routine physical examinations, as well as various educational and intervention programs to improve the quality of life of stunted children and prevent stunted generations. The results of the activity showed an increase in knowledge as well as an increase in the height and weight of stunted children and pregnant women. However, this program has not fully achieved its target due to low awareness regarding healthy eating patterns and balanced nutrition. Additional strategies such as intensive training, social support, and close collaboration are needed to increase awareness and change behavior related to diet and health.

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