

Collaborative Governance as an Innovative Strategy in Overcoming Stunting in East Flores District

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ABSTRACT

Despite various intervention programs to address stunting in East Flores Regency, the stunting prevalence rate has not yet reached the target of 10% by 2023. One of the challenges is the lack of community and private sector involvement in handling stunting. In fact, stunting intervention is not only the responsibility of the government, but also requires cross-sector collaboration to work together in optimizing the program. This research discusses collaborative governance as an innovative strategy in overcoming stunting in East Flores Regency. The research method used was qualitative with a descriptive approach. Five health workers and two community development cadres became research informants who were selected purposively. Data analysis used the interactive model of Miles B. Huberman. Data validity was strengthened through triangulation. The results showed that the application of collaborative governance with the penta helix model, namely government, entrepreneurs, academics, civil society, and mass media, is an innovative solution that can be applied in overcoming stunting. The five main stakeholders in the penta helix collaborative governance model can work together synergistically to achieve optimal results in overcoming stunting problems.

Keywords: Collaborative Governance, Penta Helix, Stunting



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INTRODUCTION

Implementing a comprehensive and varied nutritional intake during the first 1000 days of life can support brain development, promote balanced growth, and reduce the risk of disease. (1–3) On the other hand, the inability to meet nutritional needs during the first 1000 days of life can cause growth problems of a nature. permanent, including stunting. (4,5) Stunting, as a growth and development disorder due to chronic malnutrition, is a complex problem. The impact is not only limited to health and physical growth but also impacts cognitive development, which ultimately affects the quality of human resources (Ipan I, 2021, Laily,2023).

Based on the Levels and Trends in Child Malnutrition survey by UNICEF, WHO, and the World Bank Group, the global prevalence of stunting will reach 22.3% in 2022, or around 148.1 million

children aged 0–60 months will experience stunting.(8) In In 2022, the stunting prevalence rate in Indonesia will reach 21.6%, with the highest stunting prevalence rate in East Nusa Tenggara Province which reaches 35.3% (Kemenkes RI, 2022).

The high number of stunting cases in Indonesia shows that the problem of stunting is an important issue that must receive special attention from various parties. Just like the East Flores Regency Government which has taken serious steps by establishing stunting as a regional development priority, and issuing East Flores Regent Regulation Number 46 of 2022 concerning Implementing the Acceleration of Stunting Reduction. This acceleration effort involves various activities, such as stunting convergence, stunting consultation, and the innovative Love Gerobak program with the concept of providing additional food based on local resources called Solor, namely Sorghum and Moringa. Apart from that, in an effort to reduce the stunting rate towards the target of 10% by 2023 and achieve stunting-free status by 2024, East Flores Regency is developing a collaborative innovation called Go Cinta 2H2. This innovation combines the concepts of Love Cart and 2H2 Center (Kabupaten Flores Timur,2022).

Various intervention programs to overcome stunting in East Flores Regency have been carried out, but in fact the stunting prevalence rate has not yet reached the expected target of 10% stunting in 2023. The following is a table regarding the prevalence of stunting in East Flores Regency.

Table 1. Prevalence of Stunting in East Flores Regency 2019 to August 2023

Year	Total Stunting Toddlers	Stunting Percentage
2019	4.999	31,07%
2020	3.974	22,70%
2021	3.696	20,90%
2022	3.636	20,04%
Agustus 2023	3.184	18.01%

Sources . Dinas Kesehatan Kabupaten Flores Timur, 2023

The table above shows that the stunting prevalence rate in East Flores Regency continues to decline from year to year. Even though there has been a significant decline, the stunting rate in East Flores is still relatively high. Apart from that, data obtained from the East Flores Family Planning, Family Planning, Women's Empowerment and Child Protection (P2KBP3A) Population Control Service shows that East Solor District is the district with the highest number of stunted children, reaching 253 stunted toddlers (P2KBP3A Flores Timur, 2023).

A number of studies related to stunting prevention in East Flores Regency have been carried out. Several research findings show that there are obstacles in efforts to prevent stunting in East Flores Regency, such as limited human resources, minimal community participation, limited availability of food, and low understanding of State Civil Apparatus (ASN) and the public in general about stunting. Apart from that, the function and implementation of convergence at the regional government level up to the village/sub-district level together with cross-stakeholders has not run optimally. (Kelen, 2023, Picauly, 2022).

The results of the research above are in line with the results of initial observations made by researchers in East Flores Regency. Data shows that the challenge of stunting intervention in several villages in East Solor District is one of the factors being the lack of involvement of the community and the private sector in handling stunting (UPTD Puskesmas Menanga, 2023). In fact, stunting intervention is not only the responsibility of the government, but also requires cross-sector collaboration to synergize in optimizing the program . As Astuti explains, solving complex problems requires the participation of various parties involved. (Astuti, 2020)

In the last two decades, a new strategy has emerged in government governance known as collaborative governance. This is an innovative approach to policy formulation and implementation,

where the government collaborates with stakeholders, including the private sector in decision making. (19) Although the highest authority remains in the hands of the government, equal responsibility for policy outcomes is shared by all parties involved, because collaboration aims to reach agreement between stakeholders (Ansell, 2008)

Collaborative governance, as a strategy model in formulating and approving policies, does not only rely on cooperation, but also empowers every stakeholder, with the basic principle that power and responsibility must be distributed fairly among all parties involved. (Taylor, 2012) In its essence, collaborative governance creating a process where establishing, directing, facilitating and monitoring sectoral organizational plans is key in dealing with complex public policy problems that cannot be solved by one organization alone. This approach prioritizes an even distribution of power to reach an agreement that involves all stakeholders (Ansell, 2008)

Therefore, implementing collaborative governance is crucial in overcoming the stunting issue, especially because it provides a comprehensive approach through involvement of cross-actors. Research on the role of collaborative governance in overcoming stunting in East Flores Regency is very relevant and important, considering its potential as an innovative solution to realize efforts to prevent and overcome stunting. The aim of this research is to present a comprehensive picture of the implementation of collaborative governance as an innovative strategy in overcoming stunting in East Flores Regency.

METHODS

This research uses a qualitative method with a descriptive approach, focusing on the implementation of collaborative governance as an innovative strategy in overcoming stunting in East Flores Regency. Data collection was carried out through interviews, observation and documentation using primary and secondary data sources. Secondary data obtained from literature such as books and other scientific articles that support research topics with scientific literature search clusters such as collaborative governance and stunting intervention strategies. This secondary data is used to build a conceptual framework, compile literature analysis, and deepen understanding of the research topic. The research involved five Health Workers and Two Community Development Cadres as informants who were selected purposively. Data analysis uses Miles B. Huberman's interactive model, involving the stages of Data Reduction, Data Display, and Conclusion Drawing/Verification. Miles (2014) said, that the analysis process begins with data reduction from various data sources, followed by presenting the data clearly to draw conclusions regarding collaborative governance as an innovative strategy in overcoming stunting. The validity of the data is strengthened by triangulation techniques, including triangulation of sources, techniques and time, to ensure data accuracy and credibility.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Dynamics of Stunting Intervention Challenges in East Flores Regency

Efforts to prevent stunting have become a hot issue in the health sector, especially in developing countries. Many steps have been taken to improve nutrition for children and families in East Flores Regency. Addressing the stunting problem in East Flores Regency involves two types of interventions, namely Specific Interventions and Sensitive Interventions. Specific interventions are specific actions planned for the 1,000 HPK group and implemented by the health department, while sensitive interventions involve development activities outside the health sector, prioritizing a convergence approach between regional apparatus.

Stunting prevention starts when the fetus is in the womb by ensuring that pregnant women fulfill their nutritional needs. This involves adequate nutritional food intake, nutritional supplementation (Fe tablets), and monitoring the health of pregnant women. In addition, the practice of giving

exclusive breast milk to babies up to 6 months of age and providing complementary breast milk (MPASI) after 6 months of age is an integral part of efforts to prevent stunting. The importance of the role of postpartum mothers in getting nutritious food and nutritional supplementation, such as vitamin A capsules, cannot be ignored. Regular and timely monitoring of toddler growth is the key to preventing chronic stunting.

East Flores Regency has a joint commitment to overcome stunting by declaring "Gempur Stunting" based on the regent's vision which focuses on saving plants and the young generation of East Flores. After the declaration, the regional government through the health department launched the innovative "Cart of Love" program, providing additional food for 90 days to stunted children in May-July, with results measured in August. Initial funding for this program came from Health Operational Assistance (BOK) and then used village funds by exploiting the potential of local plants. Until 2023, East Flores Regency has succeeded in recording a significant reduction in stunting rates. The Grobak Cinta program, with a focus on the Gerobak Cinta Focused PMT, is a key innovation in efforts to prevent stunting. The convergence approach and involvement of local 4 star food plants, namely sorghum, moringa, fish and quail eggs, has had a big positive impact in reducing stunting.

In the implementation phase of the Love Cart program, nutrition processing staff at the community health center will hand over cooking menus, while villages will hand over Love Cart Focused PMT funds to the village PKK Mobilization Chair together with posyandu cadres according to the number of targets in the village. Then, the receipt for the transfer of funds will be signed and brought by the village official for accountability. The village PKK Mobilization Team, together with posyandu cadres, will purchase food ingredients according to the quantity and age of the target, with restrictions on buying outside the village unless it is not available in the village. All targets will gather with parents (mothers and fathers) or husbands for pregnant women to carry out the 1000 HPK campaign, so that targets understand the aims and objectives of the Love Cart Focused PMT program. PKK and posyandu cadres act as companions and directors, while target parents act as cooks to continue cooking and eating patterns at home. While waiting for their parents to cook, the children will be guided by Village Family Planning assistants in games to stimulate children's growth and development.

However, government policies do not always run smoothly. The implementation process is faced with various challenges. Some of these challenges include:

1. Limited diversity of food ingredients

The challenges of stunting intervention involve various factors, including limited access to food needed for children's growth and development. Sorghum and quail eggs are examples of main food ingredients that can be part of an intervention strategy to overcome stunting in East Flores Regency. Based on the research results, it was found that one of the obstacles to the PMT Gerobak Cinta stunting intervention program was the limited food ingredients, especially sorghum and quail eggs, which were impossible for the community to access due to the long distance. Posyandu cadres and the community have to go to distant villages to get sorghum, the main ingredient in the Love Cart Focused PMT. This is because sorghum and quail eggs are not always easy to obtain or available in all areas of East Flores Regency. Poor transportation and distribution infrastructure is a challenge in itself, making it difficult to distribute food to areas that need it.

2. Low public understanding of stunting

The public's low understanding of stunting and an indifferent attitude towards the impact of stunting can have various negative impacts, both at the individual level and at the level of society as a whole. The results of this research show that there are still many parents who do not have a strong understanding of stunting and its impacts. Many parents tend to think that their children are healthy and active, so they refuse if the results of measurements of babies or toddlers are categorized as stunting. The impact of low understanding and an indifferent attitude towards stunting can include a lack of awareness of the importance of a healthy and nutritious diet, as well as a lack of preventive measures, such as providing optimal nutrition during pregnancy and

during the early growth period of children, which can actually reduce the risk of stunting. In addition, many parents who have stunted children face social and emotional pressure due to stigmatization and discrimination in society regarding stunting. As a result, it is not uncommon for parents of children who are stunted to refuse to accept stunting intervention programs such as Supplementary Feeding (PMT). Therefore, better understanding of stunting, social support and inclusive approaches need to be improved so that parents can respond more effectively to children's health conditions.

3. Minimal Stakeholder Participation

Lack of stakeholder involvement is a serious challenge in stunting intervention efforts. Stakeholders are groups or individuals who have an interest, influence or impact on the stunting problem. Some stakeholders may not fully understand the urgency of the stunting problem and its impact on children's development. This lack of understanding can reduce motivation to be involved in efforts to prevent and treat stunting. The research results show that it is still found that community leaders such as religious leaders, traditional leaders and BPD do not fully support or are not involved in stunting intervention efforts, this can then hinder participation and support from the general public.

4. Limited Facilities and Human Resources

Implementation of stunting prevention policies in regions depends on supporting factors, including supporting facilities. Even though health facilities such as polindes, posyandu, poskesdes and community health centers already exist, problems arise regarding other supporting facilities, such as difficult road access to remote villages, inadequate community sanitation and some villages still have difficulty getting access to clean water.

Collaborative Governance as an Innovative Strategy in Overcoming Stunting in East Flores Regency

The concept of cooperation or collaboration in the study of Public Administration is known as collaborative governance. Ansel and Gash in the article Collaborative Governance in Theory and Practice explain that the term collaborative governance refers to an approach to government governance that is directly involved with stakeholders outside the government or state structure which emphasizes achieving agreement and deliberation in the process of joint decision making, with the aim of formulating or implementing public policies and community programs. (19) This approach involves various stakeholders, including government, society, the private sector and non-government organizations in decision making, planning and implementation of public service programs. Requires all stakeholders to be involved in dialogue, where these stakeholders represent themselves in expressing their interests (Innes,2002)

There are several collaborative governance models that involve the role of stakeholders, namely: first, the Triple Helix collaboration model, consisting of three actors including government, entrepreneurs and academics; second, the Quadra Helix collaboration model, consisting of four actors including government, entrepreneurs, academics and civil society; third, the Penta Helix collaboration model is a development of the two previous models which has been refined into five stakeholders, consisting of government, entrepreneurs, academics, civil society and mass media. (Calzada, 2016, Seigler, 2011)

In this research, collaborative governance emerged as an innovative strategy involving various stakeholders to overcome the stunting problem in East Flores Regency. Stunting is a condition of inadequate nutrition that causes children's physical growth and development to be hampered. In this context, collaborative governance is an effective approach because it involves active participation from various stakeholders. This research will analyze the role of stakeholders in the penta helix collaborative governance model.

Government

The government has a crucial role centered on several aspects, namely the development of knowledge infrastructure, public innovation policy, as well as support for innovation networks and

partnerships between the public and private sectors. (27) This means that the government has a central role in development and development through several key aspects. First, through infrastructure development, the government is responsible for building and improving the facilities and infrastructure needed to support economic growth and community welfare. In this case, the government can play an important role in overcoming stunting by developing health infrastructure and good parenting patterns. This can include health education for pregnant women, nutritional education, and easy access to quality health services.

Second, public innovation policy shows that the government has an important role in formulating policies that encourage innovation in various sectors, whether in the technological, economic or social fields. These policies may include incentives, regulations, or other supports that stimulate the development of innovation. Implementing public innovation policies can help create new solutions to overcome stunting. The East Flores Regency Government has taken concrete steps by establishing stunting as a regional development priority. In East Flores Regent Regulation Number 46 of 2022, the government is promoting a policy of accelerating stunting reduction through steps such as stunting convergence, stunting consultations, and the innovative PMT Gerobak Cinta program. PMT Gerobak Cinta creates innovative solutions by providing additional food based on local resources, such as Sorghum and Moringa. Implementation of this policy needs to involve incentives, research support and regulations that support the development of innovative food products or programs in the health and nutrition sectors.

Third, government support for innovation networks and partnerships between the public and private sectors emphasizes the importance of cooperation between government, business and civil society in encouraging innovation. Governments can provide financial support, facilities, or other incentives to promote collaboration and exchange of ideas between these sectors. In overcoming stunting, the East Flores Regency Government can support innovation networks and partnerships between the public and private sectors in order to increase efforts to prevent stunting by adopting a collaborative process. This collaborative process includes several key elements of facilitative leadership such as facilitating dialogue between stakeholders, building trust, commitment in the collaboration process, developing and unifying a common understanding to motivate to achieve results. (19) Research findings show that the government has not fully involved various actor segments in the collaboration process. In this context, this collaboration model emphasizes the need for the involvement of all stakeholders. Therefore, it is important to immediately involve external or wider stakeholders to support the government's role in overcoming the stunting problem. This collaboration can involve stakeholders such as entrepreneurs, CSR, NGOs, academics and the community to jointly design and implement effective programs in preventing and overcoming the problem of stunting.

Business Actor/Entrepreneur (Business)

The importance of involving the private sector, such as entrepreneurs, shows that efforts to overcome stunting are not the sole responsibility of the government but are cross-sector collaboration. Collaboration between the government and the private sector can create a more holistic and sustainable solution to overcome the stunting problem. This means that stunting intervention is not only medical or health in nature, but also includes social, economic and business aspects in order to improve children's nutrition and welfare. Apart from that, in order to reduce stunting, business actors have a responsibility to improve the nutritional and health status of their female workers by providing health rights and facilities. This will have a direct positive impact on the health of babies and children, as well as supporting wider stunting prevention efforts.

The researchers' findings show that the East Flores Regency Government has not fully involved the private sector or business actors in stunting interventions. Even though the business sector has a significant role in providing infrastructure that the government may not be able to fully fulfill. Such as allocating funding for stunting activities through corporate social responsibility activities. Entrepreneurs can increase the availability and accessibility of sorghum and quail eggs in East Flores Regency by investing in developing efficient supply chains. This involves improved transportation

infrastructure, good storage, and organized distribution. By forming partnerships with local farmers, entrepreneurs can increase production in a sustainable manner and empower local communities. So the main ingredients in the Love Cart Focused PMT, namely sorghum and quail eggs, are easy to obtain or available in all areas in East Flores Regency.

Civil Society

Stunting prevention and intervention efforts are not only medical in nature but also involve changes in behavior and understanding of society as a whole. It is very important to increase public understanding about stunting, reduce indifferent attitudes, and take the necessary steps to prevent and overcome stunting. This effort involves a comprehensive approach that includes education, health services, and support from various parties. The community has a crucial role in preventing and treating stunting by increasing awareness about its causes and impacts. Women's empowerment, supported by education and training, is relevant in the context of stunting, enabling communities to make better decisions regarding family nutrition and health. Active participation in health programs, including immunization, maternal and child health services, and nutrition training, is also the community's role in supporting health efforts. Apart from that, the community can contribute by maintaining good sanitation and clean water management at the household and community level to reduce the risk of infection and disease that can cause stunting.

Academician

Essentially, the role of academics in the penta-helix collaboration concept involves providing insight and analyzing empirical data in the field through research, analysis and human resource development activities. Even though many university tridharma activities related to stunting have been carried out, their distribution is still limited to journals and scientific meetings, so they have not had a significant impact in developing real-based policies and programs. From the research results, it was found that the academic actor group was not fully involved in overcoming the problem of stunting in the East Flores Regency area. In fact, great potential lies in collaboration between lecturers and students, which can increase the scope of program implementation, monitoring and evaluation of its impact on society. So collaboration with academic actors is important to optimize the handling of stunting. The East Flores Regency Government needs to encourage collaboration in joint research between lecturers and students to identify the factors that cause stunting, analyze the effectiveness of existing interventions, and develop innovative solutions.

Mass Media

The role of social media in stunting intervention is very important because these platforms can be an effective tool for disseminating information, increasing awareness, and mobilizing community participation. Social media has become an effective channel for conveying educational information about nutrition, healthy eating patterns and child care, by utilizing visual content such as infographics and videos to increase public understanding about stunting. Awareness campaigns on social media, through hashtags, challenges or online events, can stimulate discussion and increase understanding of the urgency of stunting. Apart from that, social media also plays a role in promoting clean and healthy living behavior, including good nutritional practices, exclusive breastfeeding and a balanced diet.

Apart from being a source of information, social media also functions as a platform to provide psychosocial support, both to parents who have stunted children and individuals who need information and support regarding nutritional problems. By utilizing social media effectively, stunting interventions can reach a wider audience, actively involve the community, and build awareness and participation in efforts to prevent and treat stunting. The importance of continuous collaboration between media actors is the final emphasis, showing that efforts to eradicate stunting require continuous involvement from the media. This collaboration can ensure that the information presented on social media remains accurate, relevant and has a positive impact in overcoming the problem of stunting.

CONCLUSION

The application of collaborative governance as an innovative strategy in overcoming stunting in East Flores Regency provides a comprehensive picture of efforts to prevent and overcome stunting. Even though there has been a significant reduction in stunting rates through the innovative "Gerobak Cinta" program, there are several challenges such as limited access to food, low community understanding, minimal stakeholder participation, and limited infrastructure and human resources. In facing this challenge, collaborative governance with the Penta Helix model emerged as an effective approach, involving government, entrepreneurs, academics, civil society and mass media in decision making and implementation of public service programs. This approach emphasizes the need for cross-sector collaboration and active participation from all stakeholders. It is hoped that concrete steps from the government, private sector, society, academics and mass media can work together to achieve better results in overcoming the stunting problem. Agreement and deliberation between stakeholders is the key to achieving success in overcoming the stunting issue. Thus, collaborative governance becomes an innovative solution that can be widely applied in overcoming complex public policy problems such as stunting.

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