



# Implementation of Stunting Prevention Policy in Tanjung Village, Nguter District, Sukoharjo Regency

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**Abstract:** Stunting is a chronic nutritional problem that affects children's growth and development, particularly in physical and cognitive aspects. This condition remains a challenge in various regions, including Tanjung Village, Nguter District, Sukoharjo Regency. This research aims to describe and analyze the implementation of stunting prevention policies in Tanjung Village based on George C. Edwards III's implementation theory, which includes communication, resources, disposition, and bureaucratic structure. The research uses a descriptive qualitative approach with data collection methods through observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation. Informants were purposively selected, consisting of village midwives, health cadres, village officials, and Puskesmas Nguter staff. The research results show that the policy implementation has been progressing quite well. Cross-sector communication is actively carried out through socialization and counseling. Human resources and supporting facilities are available, although limited by the budget. The disposition of the implementers shows a positive attitude and high commitment in executing the program. The bureaucratic structure has been equipped with Standard Operating Procedures (SOP), but there are still obstacles in the compliance of the implementers with work standards. Overall, the implementation of stunting prevention policies in Tanjung Village shows a positive direction, but still requires strengthening, especially in terms of resources and consistency of execution.

**Keywords:** Policy Implementation, Stunting, Tanjung Village

## Introduction

Stunting is a chronic malnutrition problem caused by inadequate nutrient intake over a long period, resulting in physical growth disorders in children, characterized by a height that does not meet the age standards (Sunartiningsih: 2020). This condition negatively impacts the development of brain networks, intelligence, and the overall quality of human resources. According to the Indonesian Health Survey (2023), the national prevalence of stunting reached 21.5% (Health Development Policy Agency, Ministry of Health of the Republic of Indonesia: 2023). One of the main causes is malnutrition from the womb, which becomes apparent by the age of two. There are several other factors that influence the occurrence of stunting, such as poverty, disease, poor sanitation, and lack of awareness about children's nutritional needs. Considering that the causes of nutritional problems are

quite diverse, it is important to take action to adopt a multidisciplinary approach (Aida, A. N: 2019).

The Sukoharjo Regency Government has issued Regent Regulation Number 8 of 2020 on Stunting Prevention as a form of implementing convergence actions to prevent stunting. Tanjung Village is the main focus of this research because it has a higher prevalence rate of stunting compared to the average of other villages in Sukoharjo Regency. Based on stunting prevalence data from the Population Control, Family Planning, and Women's Empowerment Office of Sukoharjo Regency in 2023, there are 32 cases of stunted toddlers, accounting for 20.9% of all cases in Sukoharjo Regency. If not addressed, stunting can have a detrimental impact on the health of toddlers and can even lead to death. Toddlers with growth disorders are more vulnerable to short-term illnesses such as diarrhea and other infectious diseases, and long-term consequences such as decreased IQ scores, reduced productivity in adulthood, and even the risk of non-communicable diseases (Supariasa et al: 2012).

However, the implementation of stunting prevention policies in Tanjung Village has not been able to run optimally. Based on the statement of the midwife in Tanjung Village, the implementation of stunting prevention policies has not been optimal due to insufficient budget allocation constraints. As a result, health cadres in each neighborhood face challenges in providing supplementary food for infants. One of the programs that has been implemented to accelerate the reduction of stunting is the Supplementary Feeding Program (PMT) for toddlers and pregnant women. PMT biscuits are distributed to toddlers during the monthly Posyandu activities regardless of their nutritional status. Nguter Health Center is expected to play an important role in addressing stunting cases in Tanjung Village. The success of this program depends on the availability of Human Resources (HR), budget, and adequate infrastructure. Funding for stunting prevention activities primarily comes from village budgets, specifically village funds. The determination of long-term and strategic goals is crucial for the success of stunting prevention initiatives.

Pre-survey results indicate low nutritional knowledge and a lack of community awareness regarding environmental sanitation as the main causes of stunting in Tanjung Village. Many parents also mistakenly believe that stunting is solely a genetic factor, whereas stunting can occur in families from various economic backgrounds. (Nurhalizah N, et al : 2023) Therefore, it is necessary to emphasize that genetics has the least impact on individual health. Therefore, the Tanjung Village government needs to continue training Posyandu officers and cadres to educate the community about various activities mandated by the government to prevent stunting. However, budget constraints remain the main obstacle in the implementation of these activities. Based on these conditions, this study aims to describe and analyze the implementation of stunting prevention policies in Tanjung Village, Nguter District, Sukoharjo Regency.

## Research Methodology

This research uses a descriptive qualitative approach to understand the implementation of stunting prevention policies in Tanjung Village, Nguter District, Sukoharjo Regency. Data were collected through observations, in-depth interviews with key informants (village midwives, health cadres, village officials, and Nguter Health Center), as well as secondary data documentation from the Population Control, Family Planning, and Women's Empowerment Office of Sukoharjo Regency. Informants were selected through purposive sampling based on their direct involvement in the implementation of the program. Data analysis uses the interactive model of Miles and Huberman, which includes data collection, data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing (Sugiyono : 2018). Data validity is tested through source and method triangulation to ensure the accuracy and credibility of research findings, as well as extending the observation period to reduce bias. The focus of the research is to identify the constraints, strategies, and effectiveness of the stunting prevention policy implementation, particularly through the Supplementary Food Program (PMT), as well as to evaluate the active roles of various sectors in supporting the convergence of stunting handling at the village level. The analysis was conducted using George C. Edward III's Theory, which states that the success of policy implementation is influenced by four main variables: communication, resources, disposition, and bureaucratic structure.

## Result and Discussion

Policy implementation is a method used to achieve the objectives of a policy, both in the short term and the long term (Muharawati: 2020). The success of implementation depends on the progress and impact generated. The main essence of policy implementation is understanding what should happen after a program is declared effective or formulated. That understanding includes efforts to administer it and create a real impact on society or events.

According to Mazmanian and Sabatier, they explain that: Policy implementation is the execution of basic policy decisions, usually in the form of laws, but it can also take the form of important executive orders or judicial decisions (Rahmatillah, R : 2024). Usually, the decision identifies the problems to be addressed, explicitly states the goals and objectives to be achieved, and outlines various ways to structure or organize the implementation process. Based on the formulation of policy implementation as mentioned above, policy implementation can be understood as the execution of activities referring to the guidelines that have been prepared so that the activities carried out can have an impact/effect on the community and can contribute to addressing the problems targeted by the program.

According to Lester and Stewart, they state that: Policy implementation is the stage of policy administration immediately after it is enacted into law. In a broad view, policy implementation is defined as the administration of laws into various actors, organizations, procedures, and techniques that work together to achieve the goals and impacts intended by the policy (Rauf Basyuri, H: 2024). Furthermore, Bressman and Wildansky state that:

Policy implementation is a process of interaction between a set of goals and actions capable of achieving those goals (Jusman, M: 2022).

Policy implementation is a continuation of the policy formulation stage. At the formulation stage, strategies and policy objectives are established, while at the policy implementation stage, actions are organized to achieve the desired goals. Initial surveys indicate that every policy or regulation issued will inevitably undergo development, although not yet significant. The stunting prevention policy in Tanjung Village, Nguter District, Sukoharjo Regency refers to the Regent's Regulation Number 8 of 2020 on Stunting Prevention. The research on the implementation of this policy uses George C. Edwards III's model, which includes four dimensions: communication, resources, disposition, and bureaucratic structure (Fauzan, A: 2024).

### **Communication**

Communication plays a crucial role in ensuring the success of public policies, where in the public policy cycle, success depends not only on the formulation of the policy itself but also on how the policy is communicated to the public from the planning stage to the evaluation stage. This is in line with Lasswell's communication model, which highlights the urgency of communication, particularly regarding who says what, through which channel, to whom, and with what effect (Herliani, F: 2024). In the context of governance, poorly orchestrated communication strategy management through a single narrative supported by data and facts can lead to decreased public engagement in the success of policies and impact the overall image of the government. Furthermore, it can cause misunderstandings, distrust, and even rejection of well-designed policies (Khalisah, N., & Soelistiyowaty, R. R: 2025).

In simple terms, public policy communication is related to the role of government public relations in conveying the message "what the government is doing" (the actions of government), which impacts the government's efforts to improve the welfare of the people through various public policies, in order to achieve meaningful participation, a sense of ownership, and increased trust and support from the public towards the government's work. Public communication strategy management must be able to meet the public's information needs, shape a positive institutional image, provide updates on what has been, is being, and will be done, its benefits to the community, and gather responses from the public.

Based on field observations, it shows that the communication process in the implementation of the stunting prevention policy in Tanjung Village has been running well. This communication is carried out in the form of socialization conducted by the village government together with health center officers and posyandu cadres to the community. Puskesmas officers and posyandu cadres actively provide counseling about stunting and the PMT program to the community in accordance with the directives from the health department. Meanwhile, the village government plays a role in coordinating cross-party communication to ensure that the message can be conveyed effectively.

Through clear communication supported by the involvement of all parties, the implementation of stunting prevention in Tanjung Village can show better results. It can be

said that communication is a determining factor in the success of implementing a program. This is in line with George C. Eqward III's theory in Widodo (2012), which defines communication as "the process of conveying information from the communicator to the communicant." In simple terms, information regarding public policy needs to be conveyed to the implementers so that they understand what needs to be prepared and done to achieve the goals and objectives of the policy. Policy communication encompasses three main dimensions: transmission, clarity, and consistency.

## Resources

Policy resources are everything used to support the success of the implemented policy. Resources play an important role in the success of policy implementation after communication. According to George C. Eqward III in Widodo (2012), influential resources include human resources, budget, equipment, and authority. These resource components include the number of staff, the expertise of the implementers, relevant and sufficient information to implement policies and fulfill related resources in program execution, authority that ensures the program can be directed as expected, and supporting facilities that can be used to carry out program activities such as funds and infrastructure. Insufficient human resources (in terms of quantity and capability) result in the inability to implement the program perfectly because they cannot supervise effectively. If the number of policy implementation staff is limited, then what must be done is to enhance the skills/abilities of the implementers to carry out the program.

Therefore, good HR management is necessary to improve program performance. The inability of the program implementers is due to the fact that energy conservation policies are new to them, and implementing this program requires special skills; at the very least, they must master electrical techniques. Information is an important resource for the implementation of policies. There are two forms of information: information on how to implement policies/programs, and for the implementers, they need to know what actions to take and information about supporting data for compliance with government regulations and laws (Suciana, P. et al: 2022). The reality on the ground is that the central level does not know the needs required by the field implementers. The lack of information/knowledge on how to implement policies has direct consequences such as irresponsible implementers or implementers being absent from the workplace, leading to inefficiency. Policy implementation requires organizational and individual compliance with existing government regulations.

Another important resource is the authority to determine how the program is implemented, the authority to spend/manage finances, including the provision of funds, staff procurement, and supervisor procurement (Fauzan, A: 2024). The facilities required to implement the policy/program must be met, such as offices, equipment, and sufficient funds. Without these facilities, it is impossible for the program to run. Research results show that health cadres in Tanjung Village have carried out their duties with enthusiasm and actively. Although some are still voluntary and have not fully understood their tasks, the implementation of the policy can continue because there are



clear regulations and mechanisms from the village level to the RT/RW. In addition, supporting facilities such as Poskesdes have been maximally utilized with five posts allocated for the cadres. The authority to carry out this activity is the policy of the village government, which collaborates with health center officers as the implementers in the field.

The village government, together with the health department, also provides support in the form of a budget from village funds that have been allocated for the stunting prevention program. Therefore, it can be concluded that the resources in Tanjung Village, in terms of human resources, budget, equipment, and authority, are adequate and support the implementation of the stunting prevention program well in achieving successful policy implementation.

### **Disposition**

Disposition is the attitude or willingness of policy implementers that significantly affects the success of policy implementation. Policy implementation faces significant obstacles when implementers adopt a negative attitude in applying the policy due to conflicts of interest. According to Eqward III, disposition includes the willingness, tendency, and desire to implement policies earnestly, influenced by bureaucratic appointments and the provision of incentives (Widodo: 2012). One of the factors that influence the effectiveness of policy implementation is the attitude of the implementor. If the implementers agree with parts of the policy, they will carry it out gladly, but if their views differ from those of the policymakers, the implementation process will encounter many problems.

There are three forms of implementor attitudes/responses towards policies: the awareness of the implementers, the guidance/direction of the implementers to respond to the program towards acceptance or rejection, and the intensity of that response (Tuti, R. W: 2020) The implementers may understand the intent and objectives of the program, but they often fail to execute the program properly because they reject its goals, thus secretly diverting and avoiding the implementation of the program. In addition, support from the implementing officials is crucial in achieving the program's objectives. Support from the leadership greatly influences the implementation of the program to achieve its goals effectively and efficiently.

The manifestation of this leadership support is prioritizing policies as program priorities, assigning implementers with individuals who support the program, and considering the balance of regions, religions, ethnicities, genders, and other demographic characteristics. In addition, providing sufficient funds to give incentives to program implementers so that they support and work fully in executing the policy/program. Based on the research findings, the implementation of the stunting prevention program in Tanjung Village is carried out by active health cadres who demonstrate a positive attitude, mutual cooperation, and a willingness to learn. There is already a clear division of tasks, as well as incentive and transportation support from village funds to support programs like PMT through door-to-door visits to families affected by stunting. It can be concluded that the disposition of the policy implementers in Tanjung Village is good and has a positive impact, especially for families suffering from stunting.

## Bureaucratic Structure

The structure of bureaucracy and clear division of labor are important in the implementation of public policy because they demonstrate the presence of professional and expert actors. The bureaucratic structure is organized based on specific legal regulations. Friedrich defines policy as an action designed to achieve specific goals amidst obstacles and opportunities (Winarno: 2012). Bureaucracy is one of the institutions that most often, and even entirely, carries out activities. The existence of bureaucracy is not only within the structure of the government but also in private organizations, educational institutions, and so on. Even in certain cases, bureaucracy is created solely to implement a specific policy. Ripley and Franklin identified six characteristics of bureaucracy as a result of their observations of bureaucracy in the United States, namely (SHOLEH, A. R: 2023):

- a) Bureaucracy is created as an instrument in handling public affairs.
- b) Bureaucracy is the dominant institution in the implementation of public policy, with varying interests at each level of its hierarchy.
- c) Bureaucracy has a number of different objectives.
- d) The function of bureaucracy operates in a complex and vast environment.
- e) Bureaucracy has a strong survival instinct, making it very rare to find a bureaucracy that dies out.
- f) Bureaucracy is not a neutral force and is not fully under external control.

Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) and clear work standards are necessary in the implementation of stunting prevention programs to minimize errors and support the effectiveness of the execution. Additionally, moral responsibility from field implementers is necessary to ensure that activities can be carried out optimally. A well-organized bureaucratic structure helps ensure the continuity and sustainability of programs systematically (Daswati, D., & Ahsan, S. C: 2024).

The implementation of complex policies requires the cooperation of many parties. When the bureaucratic structure is not conducive to the implementation of a policy, it will lead to ineffectiveness and hinder the execution of the policy. Based on the research findings, health cadres in Tanjung Village have studied and implemented the activity SOPs well, so the community has started to understand and apply stunting prevention efforts with quite positive results. However, there are still challenges such as a lack of adherence to work standards. Overall, the implementation of the stunting prevention policy in Tanjung Village has been going well. This is supported by four main variables that determine the success of policy implementation.

## Conclusion

Based on the four implementation variables of George C. Edwards III, it can be concluded that the implementation of the stunting prevention policy in Tanjung Village has been carried out well. Communication between parties is effective through socialization and counseling. Human resources, budget, and facilities are already supportive, although still limited. The disposition of the implementers shows a positive attitude and high enthusiasm. The bureaucratic structure has been organized with SOPs, although there are still

compliance issues. Overall, the policy has been implemented according to its objectives, but there is still a need for strengthening resources and compliance with work standards.

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