

## Good Practices Reducing Stunting in Sumedang Regency

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### ABSTRACT

Sumedang Regency has implemented an Electronic Based Government System (SPBE) in carrying out its government activities. This system supports targets that must be achieved in various fields, one of which is the health sector, namely reducing the stunting rate. Based on the results of fieldwork conducted by the National Research and Innovation Agency (BRIN) team, the system is very supportive of efforts at the district level and even down to the village level in monitoring the prevalence of stunting. However, the system is a tool without meaning if it is not accompanied by leadership commitment and the cooperation of all parties in achieving the stunting reduction target. The existence of SPBE, the government's commitment, as well as the cooperation of all parties are the keys to achieving a reduction in the prevalence of stunting. The recommendation proposed as a policy consideration is if SPBE is to be implemented in all regencies/cities throughout Indonesia whose stunting is below the national reduction target. To reduce stunting sustainably, the following prerequisites are needed: 1) Availability of adequate internet access and digital technology; 2) Transparency and Accountability; 3) Data protection and privacy; and 4) Leadership and Resources.

*KeyWords: Stunting, Intervention, Leadership Commitment, Cooperation, Sumedang.*



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### INTRODUCTION

Investing in human resources is Indonesia's priority towards Indonesia Gold 2045 (Rijal et al., 2022). One of the efforts made by Indonesia to invest in future human resources is to overcome the problem of stunting. Stunting or growth and development disorders in children is a serious public health problem in Indonesia, including in Sumedang Regency. Sumedang Regency is one of the districts that has succeeded in reducing the prevalence of stunting. According to the 2018 Indonesian Toddler Nutrition Status Survey (SSGBI) data (Andoyo et al., 2022), stunting in Sumedang Regency was 32.2%. This figure will drop to 27.6% in 2022. One of the causes of stunting in Sumedang Regency based on the results of research by Widyaningsih et al (2021) is related to parents' limited income so they are unable to provide sufficient nutritious food for their toddlers.

Sumedang Regency has implemented an SPBE so that all government activities can be efficient and effective and improve the quality of public services. The implementation of SPBE in Sumedang Regency is already in the maturity phase present going to interaction (Cahyana, 2022). Based on the decision of the Minister of State Apparatus Empowerment and Bureaucratic Reform, No. 108/2023 Concerning the Results of Monitoring and Evaluation of Electronic-Based Governance Systems at Central Agencies and Local Governments In 2022, this Regency won an SPBE index of 3.84 and is the highest score among other Regencies (Hidayah & Almadani, 2022). This tool is also implemented to reduce the prevalence of stunting under the name of the Integrated Stunting Management

Information System (SIMPATI). The device supports efforts to enable health workers to quickly and accurately monitor and identify children who are stunted. The use of this system to reduce the prevalence of stunting is carried out by involving stakeholders in all lines of the Sumedang Regency. However, the application of SPBE Sumedang Regency in reducing stunting rates is not the only thing in reducing stunting success. Another thing that is no less important is the commitment of regional leaders and the cooperation of all stakeholders. Thus, if these three things are combined and carried out in earnest, success in reducing stunting can be achieved.

## LITERATURE REVIEWS

### 2.1 Regional Commitment to the Implementation of SPBE

*Digital Governance* or digital governance is a discipline that focuses on establishing structures, processes, and policies to regulate digital aspects within an organization (Husni, 2023). The aim is to ensure the effectiveness and efficiency of managing digital resources, as well as meeting the needs of users and the organization's business objectives. According to Welchman (2015), digital governance also includes issues of data security, compliance, content management, and risk management related to digital technology.

In addressing stunting, the SPBE application can be used as an intervention monitoring tool to address stunting. In addition, SPBE can also be a forum for coordination and synergy between SKPD and related stakeholders. Based on the good practice experience of Sumedang Regency in accelerating the reduction of stunting, it is important to consider the context of the management model applied by the regional head as the top manager in terms of guiding, mobilizing, and supervising the use of the application to implement the program. Sympathy as an SPBE application implemented by Sumedang Regency is a unifying tool for intervention as well as a monitoring tool for leaders, starting from the head of the Puskesmas, the head of the health service, the regional secretary, and the District Head.

None of this would have been possible without the goodwill and seriousness of the local government, which has a sufficient budget to support the implementation of the SPBE concept in the Sumedang Regency. The 2022 APBD budget is IDR. 2.77 trillion (PERDA 18 2021) is very limited and cannot meet the planned population of around 1.159 million (Imelda, 2022). Accelerating the reduction of stunting certainly requires matching funds from other sources. Sumedang Regency seems to have entered into partnerships with several other private institutions such as PT Telkomsel. This company facilitates digital utilization and its digital ecosystem such as data packages in smartphones to the cadres in inputting the results of measurements and weighing of toddlers. Furthermore, together with the Telkomsel government, we are trying to encourage sustainable digital *governance* and support the health information system through the SIMPATI application in Sumedang Regency. Based on the results of interviews with the Sumedang Regency Secretary and his staff, the need for activities to reduce stunting can be broken down as follows: 1) Procurement of human resources to manage applications; 2) Anthropometry procurement of 3 (three) units per posyandu; 3) Provide data packages for each Posyandu head; 4) Provides *smartphone* for Posyandu cadres in the context of inputting toddler measurement data; 5) Provide training to posyandu cadres on identifying stunted children and techniques for weighing and measuring children's height; 6) Provision of an internet network system to support applications; 7) Pay monthly fees to Posyandu cadres; and 8) Procurement of

health workers as companions in each village.

In addition, things that need to be considered in encouraging an increase in the quality of information produced by the e-SimpatI platform in Sumedang Regency based on information in the field include (Sofa, 2023): 1) Data Quality: The data that enters the SimpatI platform must be of good quality including accurate, complete, relevant and up to date; 2) Data verification process: The SimpatI Platform must have a strict data verification process to ensure that the data generated is of good quality; 3) Information Security: The SimpatI Platform must have an adequate information security system to protect information from data access or leakage; 4) Accountability: the SimpatI platform must have a clear accountability process to ensure transparency and accountability in information management; and 5) System Availability: The SimpatI platform must have sufficient availability to ensure users can access information when needed.

### 3.2 SIMPATI's ability to reduce stunting in Sumedang Regency

Some of the advantages of using the SIMPATI application as a result of direct observation and discussion with posyandu cadres, village heads, and residents involved in helping to reduce stunting include:

- **Easier and Faster Access to Health Information:** The SIMPATI application can provide easy and fast access to health and nutrition information needed by parents and pregnant women, without having to wait to meet with health workers in person. This information can assist cadres in monitoring their child's development and providing proper nutrition during the child's early growth.
- **Regular Child Health Monitoring:** The SIMPATI application can assist cadres and other village officials in regularly monitoring the health of children and toddlers in their area and reporting developments in children's health to local health workers. This can help detect health problems in children early and provide appropriate interventions to prevent further health problems.
- **Facilitating Communication with Health Workers and Posyandu Cadres:** The e-Sympathy application can facilitate communication between parents and local health workers so that parents can easily ask questions and consult about their child's health problems online. This can help increase parents' access to health services and encourage them to be more active in caring for their children's health. To improve this communication, the capacity of Posyandu cadres to detect and prevent stunting is first carried out. This has been started since 2019 as researched by Megawati & Wiramihardja (2019).
- **Facilitate Child Health Data Collection and Reporting:** The SimpatI application can assist health workers in collecting data and reporting on children's health regularly. This can help identify health problems in children more quickly and provide appropriate interventions to prevent further health problems.
- **Use of Accessible Technology:** The SIMPATI application can be accessed via Via smartphone or other mobile devices, which many parents in rural areas have. The use of easily accessible technology can make it easier for parents to obtain the information and health services they need.

Of all these needs, of course, the budgeting policy must be supported together by the legislature and the executive. In addition to the implementation of SPBE with SIMPATI services which have made a significant contribution to efforts to reduce stunting, the commitment of regional leaders and the cooperation of all parties cannot be ignored. Based on field findings, stakeholders from top to bottom have great enthusiasm and commitment

to reducing stunting rates. Based on interviews with village midwives and several mothers who have stunted children and observations of activities carried out by midwives in charge of the South Sumedang Health Center area, efforts to reduce stunting in that area are very intense and massive. Midwives who are the spearhead in the field work with totality. Each region has a predetermined posyandu schedule so that families with toddlers and toddlers come to the posyandu to check their growth and development. If there are children who are not present, the team including the midwife visits the house to weigh them and check their health conditions. Thus, there is not a single child who does not have developmental and growth information in the records of field officers. In addition, according to information from mothers who have stunted children, they receive education from the team so they can do what is suggested at home, such as eating more protein that is easy to get in the area, such as catfish, eel, and duck eggs.

The intervention to accelerate the reduction of stunting in Sumedang Regency does not only target children under five years of age but efforts to prevent it as early as possible for young girls through a sensitive intervention mechanism. Then, as a preventive effort to prevent stunting, youth posyandu activities were activated, activities in the form of health education and provision of iron to prevent anemia. In addition, pregnant women in the area are also the target of intervention so that when their babies are born they are not stunted. The findings of this study also confirm a previous study conducted by Afriani & Budianto (2022) which showed that three strategies were used to reduce stunting in Sumedang Regency. These strategies are organizational strategy, program strategy, and resource strategy.

## CONCLUSIONS

From the results of the literature review and direct field visits and analysis, it can be concluded that the important factors that have contributed to the success of Sumedang Regency in reducing stunting rates include: 1) Local Government Commitment: The Sumedang Regency Government has a high commitment in dealing with stunting problems and implementing good governance concepts digital or SPBE. This is reflected in the policies and programs launched by the government, such as increasing access to health and nutrition and increasing the use of digital technology to support health information systems through the use of SIMPATI; 2) Partnerships with Private Parties: Sumedang Regency has established partnerships with several private institutions, including PT. Telkomsel facilitates the use of digital technology and supports health information systems through the Simpati application. This support from the private sector is very important to accelerate the reduction in the stunting rate in Sumedang Regency; 3) Community Participation: Public awareness of the importance of balanced nutrition and health is the key to the success of the stunting reduction program. Sumedang Regency involves the community in the programs implemented, such as through cadre training and outreach activities; and 4) Use of Digital Technology: Sumedang Regency utilizes digital technology to support health information systems and increase access to health information for the community. This allows information on children's health and nutrition to be collected and analyzed more effectively. By taking into account these factors, Sumedang Regency has succeeded in significantly reducing the stunting rate and has become an example of success in tackling the problem of malnutrition in Indonesia.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Considering that the implementation of the SPBE in the Sumedang Regency is a good practice in accelerating the reduction of stunting, in this case, this application can be applied in all regencies/cities where stunting is still below the national reduction target. For the reduction of stunting to be carried out sustainably and for the SIMPATI can continue to get better, a strong commitment from the Sumedang Regency government is needed:

- Increasing the Availability of Digital Infrastructure: The government of Sumedang Regency needs to ensure that the digital infrastructure needed for the implementation of e-SimpatI is available and accessible to all people, including those in remote or hard-to-reach areas.
- Provision of Open Data: The government of Sumedang Regency should ensure that government data is made available to the public openly and transparently so that the community can use it to increase participation and decision-making.
- HR Training: The government of Sumedang Regency must provide adequate training and education for HR responsible for implementing SIMPATI so that they have sufficient skills and knowledge in managing digital technology and ensuring its security.
- Implementation of Digital Security: The Sumedang Regency Government must ensure that the SIMPATI system and infrastructure used are safe and protected from digital security threats by Law No. 27/2022 concerning the Protection of Personal Data.
- Community Involvement: The government of Sumedang Regency should actively involve the community in the decision-making process and provide the means to participate in the implementation of SIMPATI, to increase community participation, and ensure a more transparent and accountable government.
- Provision of Digital Public Services: Sumedang Regency Government should provide other digital public services to increase efficiency and ease of access for the community. Public services such as business services, health services, and population administration can be provided through digital platforms that are easily accessible to the public.
- Regular Evaluation: The Sumedang Regency Government must carry out regular evaluations of the implementation of SIMPATI that have been carried out so that it can identify weaknesses and make improvements as needed.

National Research and Innovation Agency (BRIN) Support Recommendations:

- Increasing Research and Innovation in the Field of Digital Governance: BRIN can increase research and innovation in the field of Digital Governance to ensure that digital technology used in the regions can run effectively and efficiently and by the needs of the community and government.
- Encouraging Collaboration and Cooperation: BRIN can encourage collaboration and cooperation between local governments, research institutions, the private sector, and communities in developing Digital Governance inclusive, participatory, and sustainable.
- Provide Technical Support and Consultation: BRIN can provide technical and advisory support to local governments in the development and management of digital technology for implementation Digital Governance.
- Increase HR Capacity: BRIN can increase the capacity of HR involved in the implementation of Digital Governance in the regions through training, education, and skills development according to needs.
- Encouraging Adoption of New Digital Technologies: BRIN can encourage the adoption of the latest digital technologies and innovations in implementation Digital Governance

so that regions can take advantage of digital technology that is more sophisticated and effective.

- Develop Digital Governance Prototypes: BRIN can develop prototypes Digital Governance which can be used as a model or example for local governments in the development and management of digital technology.
- Increasing Public Awareness: BRIN can increase public awareness about the importance of implementation of Digital Governance in the regions through campaigns, seminars, and other public communication programs.

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