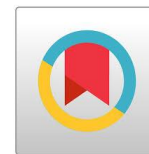


**Synergy in Accelerating the Reduction of Stunting in Seram Bagian Timur Regency, Maluku Province**



**Sinergitas dalam Percepatan Penurunan Stunting di Kabupaten Seram Bagian Timur, Provinsi Maluku**

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ARTICLE INFORMATION

**Keywords**

*Synergy;  
 Stunting;  
 Communication;  
 Coordination;*

**ABSTRACT**

This study aims to analyse the synergy in accelerating the reduction of stunting in Seram Bagian Timur Regency and to identify the factors that support and hinder the acceleration of stunting reduction in Seram Bagian Timur Regency. This study uses a qualitative approach. Data collection techniques were conducted through interviews, observations, and document studies. This study uses the concept of synergy which includes two main dimensions: communication and coordination. The results of the study indicate that synergy in accelerating the reduction of stunting in Seram Bagian Timur Regency has shown progress through the active role of the local government in communication, cross-sectoral coordination, and the implementation of specific and sensitive interventions. However, the synergy achieved is not yet optimal. In terms of communication, there are still limitations in communication media such as pocketbooks and leaflets, which hinder information dissemination, and two-way communication or feedback has not been effective, as evidenced by the presence of audiences providing irrelevant responses. In terms of coordination, weaknesses lie in the low capacity of some cadres and the lack of awareness among village governments and communities regarding the urgency of stunting. Budget constraints and shortages of health workers such as midwives, nurses, and nutrition educators limit the scope of services, particularly in remote areas. Difficult geographical conditions further complicate efforts to accelerate stunting reduction. Therefore, it is recommended to enhance synergy in accelerating stunting reduction in Seram Bagian Timur District through: strengthening human resources, including improving cadre capacity and equitable distribution of health workers; increasing awareness among village governments and communities about the urgency of stunting; strengthening programme funding; and implementing interventions tailored to the geographical conditions of the area.

**Kata Kunci**

*Sinergitas;  
 Stunting;  
 Komunikasi;  
 Koordinasi;*

**ABSTRAK**

Penelitian ini bertujuan menganalisis sinergitas dalam percepatan penurunan *stunting* di Kabupaten Seram Bagian Timur dan juga mengidentifikasi faktor-faktor yang mendukung dan faktor-faktor yang menghambat dalam Percepatan penurunan *stunting* di kabupaten seram bagian timur. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif. Teknik pengumpulan data dilakukan melalui wawancara, observasi dan studi dokumentasi. Penelitian ini menggunakan konsep sinergitas yang mencakup dua dimensi utama: komunikasi dan koordinasi. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa sinergitas percepatan penurunan *stunting* di Kabupaten Seram Bagian Timur telah menunjukkan kemajuan melalui peran aktif pemerintah daerah dalam komunikasi, koordinasi lintas sektor, serta pelaksanaan intervensi spesifik dan sensitif. Namun, Sinergitas yang tercapai belum optimal. Dapat dilihat pada aspek komunikasi masih terdapat keterbatasan media komunikasi seperti buku saku dan leaflet menghambat penyebaran informasi, dan komunikasi dua arah atau umpan balik belum berjalan baik, terlihat dari masih adanya audiens yang memberi tanggapan tidak relevan. Di sisi koordinasi, kelemahan terletak pada rendahnya kapasitas sebagian kader serta minimnya kesadaran pemerintah desa dan masyarakat terhadap urgensi *stunting*. Keterbatasan anggaran dan kurangnya

	<p>tenaga kesehatan seperti bidan, perawat, dan penyuluh gizi mempersempit cakupan layanan, terutama di wilayah terpencil. Kondisi geografis yang sulit turut memperumit upaya percepatan penurunan <i>stunting</i>. Olehnya itu direkomendasikan peningkatan sinergitas percepatan penurunan <i>stunting</i> di Kabupaten Seram Bagian Timur melalui: penguatan SDM, yang meliputi peningkatan kapasitas kader dan pemerataan tenaga kesehatan. peningkatan kesadaran pemerintah desa dan masyarakat terhadap urgensi <i>stunting</i>, penguatan pembiayaan program, serta pelaksanaan intervensi yang disesuaikan dengan kondisi geografis daerah.</p>
<p><b>Article History</b> Send 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2025 Review 25<sup>th</sup> July 2025 Accepted 9<sup>th</sup> November 2025</p>	<p>Copyright ©2026 <a href="#">Jurnal Aristo (Social, Politic, Humaniora)</a> This is an open access article under the <a href="#">CC-BY-NC-SA</a> license. Akses artikel terbuka dengan model <a href="#">CC-BY-NC-SA</a> sebagai lisensinya.</p>



## Introduction

Stunting is one of the public health issues that remains a serious challenge in Indonesia. Stunting, or growth failure in children under five, is characterised by height below the standard for their age, as a result of chronic malnutrition that occurs from the womb until the age of two. The impact of stunting is extensive, not only causing physical growth retardation, but also reducing cognitive abilities and future productivity, thereby affecting the quality of human resources nationally.

At the national level, addressing stunting has become a human development priority as outlined in the 2020–2024 National Medium-Term Development Plan (RPJMN) and reinforced by Presidential Regulation (Perpres) No. 72 of 2021 on Accelerating Stunting Reduction with a target of reducing stunting to 14% by 2024. This Presidential Regulation emphasises the importance of specific and sensitive interventions that must be implemented in an integrated and cross-sectoral manner, with a family and community-based approach. However, achieving the national target still faces challenges, especially in areas with limited resources, infrastructure, and cross-sectoral coordination.

At the regional level, Seram Bagian Timur Regency (SBT) in Maluku Province is one of the regions that still faces serious challenges in tackling stunting. Difficult geographical conditions, limited health facilities, and low community access to clean water, sanitation, and nutrition education add to the complexity of the stunting problem in SBT Regency. The SBT Regency Government has integrated stunting reduction efforts into regional planning documents such as the 2021–2026 RPJMD (Regional Medium-Term Development Plan) by forming a Stunting Reduction Acceleration Team (TPPS) from the regency to the sub-district and village levels. The Stunting Reduction Acceleration Team (TPPS) in the regency was formed to coordinate various relevant regional apparatus organisations to ensure that the programmes implemented are mutually supportive. In addition, the district TPPS also develops an action plan to accelerate stunting reduction, which includes specific and sensitive nutritional interventions, facilitates implementation in the field, monitors and evaluates the effectiveness of stunting reduction programmes, and ensures that the policies implemented are in line with regional needs and conditions.

Based on data from the Indonesian Nutrition Status Survey (SSGI), the stunting rate in SBT reached 41% in 2021 and decreased significantly to 24.1% in 2022. BKPK Ministry of Health RI (2023) This shows the efforts of the local government in reducing the stunting rate. Furthermore, based on the Indonesian Health Status Survey (SKI), the stunting rate in SBT increased to 27.3% in 2023 BKPK Ministry of Health RI (2024) This shows

fluctuations in the stunting rate in SBT district. Despite various interventions, such as the launch of a simultaneous intervention programme to prevent stunting for pregnant women, infants, toddlers, and prospective brides, as well as strengthening visits to health posts and intensive monitoring of children's nutritional status. However, in 2023, there was a resurgence in stunting cases, indicating issues with programme sustainability and weak control over stunting risk factors. These fluctuations reflect that the success in reducing stunting rates cannot rely solely on short-term programmes but requires strong, sustainable, and adaptive synergy among stakeholders. The resurgence of stunting cases in 2023 warrants serious attention, as it may be caused by weak cross-sectoral coordination and suboptimal data utilisation limitations in monitoring and evaluation, as well as minimal active participation from the community and village government.

The data shows that the acceleration in the decline of stunting in SBT Regency has increased again after declining, meaning that there has been fluctuation in 2023. This highlights the importance of conducting research to review the extent to which synergy between relevant parties has been established, as well as the obstacles and opportunities for strengthening it in the future. This research is important to explore in depth why the decline in stunting is not sustainable, and what role cross-sectoral synergy plays in maintaining the long-term effectiveness of the programme. Thus, this research is aimed at critically analysing the synergies that have been and are being built in efforts to accelerate stunting reduction in Seram Bagian Timur Regency, as well as identifying the inhibiting and supporting factors, especially in the context of the dynamics of stunting data, which had declined but then increased again. The implementation of the Acceleration of Stunting Reduction cannot be done sectorally and partially. It requires integrated efforts through cross-sectoral synergy with strong coordination as the key.

Synergy is often associated with a combination where two organisations working together will be more efficient than if the two organisations worked independently. The concept of synergy is essentially that in achieving a goal, efforts made systematically and together will yield greater results than if made independently. These joint activities, which are separate but interconnected, will produce a total effect that is greater than the sum of the individual and separate parts. In this context, synergy is the key. As stated by Najiyati (2011), synergy is defined as a combination or merging of elements or parts that can produce better and greater output. Synergy is the process of integrating several activities to achieve optimal results, or combining elements to produce better output. Synergy can be achieved in two

ways, namely communication and coordination. Through efficient communication and good coordination, this synergy can be formed, leading to an increase in the desired achievements.

Communication is the process of conveying information, ideas, thoughts, and feelings from one person to another in an effort to produce mutual understanding. Communication enables good decision-making, cooperation, and coordination in organisations and social development. Communication can take various forms: verbal (spoken/written), non-verbal (gestures, expressions), direct (face-to-face), or through the media (mass or digital communication). In the context of organisations and community development, effective communication is the basis for creating coordination, participation, and behavioural change. Effendy (2011) states that communication is the process of conveying a message from one person to another to inform, change attitudes, opinions, or behaviour, either directly or indirectly. Referring to Pratminingsih (2006), there are five important elements needed to create effective communication, namely: Source or Communicator: The source of information is an individual or entity that sends a message, which can be a person, group, organisation, or institution. Message: Anything that has meaning for the recipient. The message is the end result of the encoding process. Messages can take the form of words, facial expressions, tone of voice, and appearance. Media: Media refers to the tools used by communicators to convey messages to recipients, which can be letters, telephone calls, seminars, meetings, or online meeting platforms. Feedback: Feedback is the reaction of the message recipient to the sender. This reaction can be in the form of support (pro) or rejection (con) of the message received. Interference: Interference includes all forms of obstacles that can disrupt the communication process, whether verbal, nonverbal, physical, or originating from the surrounding environment.

Coordination is the process of integrating various activities and resources from different agencies so that they can run simultaneously and be directed towards a common goal. Coordination is an effort to harmonise and integrate various activities so that there is no overlap, gaps or conflicts in the implementation of tasks. Coordination facilitates open information exchange, proportional task sharing and structured evaluation. This process is central to building synergy, as it prevents programme duplication and enhances efficiency in resource use. Collective commitment is driven by strong coordination. All parties are committed to carrying out their responsibilities consistently and helping each other, which is a sign of this commitment. The impact of each intervention, whether specific or sensitive, will be more integrated and effective when coordination runs smoothly and is based on a spirit of synergy. According to Handayani (2000), coordination is the process of

integrating activities so that organisational goals can be achieved efficiently and effectively. According to Handyaningrat (2000) in Mashita (2023), coordination has criteria that include agreement and commitment related to the clear division of tasks and responsibilities, as well as the existence of an agreement or alignment of intentions between parties. Competence, related to the level of knowledge, ability, attitude, work ethic, and competence of stakeholders that can be beneficial to the implementation of the programme. Awareness, related to the responsibility of the implementer for the results of coordination; stakeholders with high awareness tend to be responsible for their duties and obligations. Continuity, related to coordination being carried out continuously and sustainably, in line with changes in the environment.

## **Method**

This research was conducted in Seram Bagian Timur Regency, Maluku Province. Data collection techniques included observation, interviews, and documentation studies. Data sources included primary and secondary data. Primary data was obtained through direct interviews and observation of informants, while secondary data included supporting data that reinforced the primary data and was strongly related to the core issues under study. In this study, informants were selected using purposive sampling and snowball sampling methods. The informants in this study were the Regency Stunting Reduction Acceleration Team (TPPS), namely the Deputy Regent, Nina Parenting (Chair of the Regency TP. PKK), the Head of the Population Control and Family Planning Agency, the Head of Population Control, the Head of the Health Agency, the Head of Public Health, the Head of Social Culture (Bappeda), the PAUD coordinator (Education, Youth and Sports Agency), Head of the Village Community Empowerment Division (Village Community, Women & Children Empowerment Agency), Head of the Social Assistance Division (Social Agency), Head of the Food Crops & Horticulture Division (Agriculture Agency), Head of the Fisheries Division (Fisheries & Marine Agency), Head of the Waste Management Division (Environment Agency), Head of the Creative Works Division (Public Works and Housing Agency), Head of the Food Security and Availability Division (Food Security Agency), Head of the Housing Division (Housing Agency & People's Housing and Settlement Agency), the Village Heads of Wailola and Silohan, the Village Midwives of Wailola and Silohan, the Posyandu cadres of Wailola and Silohan, the family planning cadres of Wailola and Silohan, and the communities of Wailola and Silohan. Data analysis included data collection, data condensation, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. The main focus of

the research is to assess cross-sectoral synergy in efforts to accelerate stunting reduction in Seram Bagian Timur Regency.

## **Results and Discussion**

### **Synergy in Accelerating Stunting Reduction in Seram Bagian Timur Regency**

#### **Communication**

In this study, communication was examined according to Pratminingsih (2006), who stated that communication consists of several important basic elements, namely the communicator (message sender), the message (content conveyed), the medium or communication channel, and feedback (response from the recipient). These elements function as integral and interrelated parts so that communication can take place effectively and the communication objectives can be achieved. Pratminingsih emphasises the importance of signs, symbols, and semiotic rules that are commonly understood in the conveyance of meaning between communicating parties.

#### **Communicator**

According to Pratminingsih, a communicator is a party or individual who acts as the sender of a message in a communication process. The communicator's task is to convey the message effectively to the communicant (message recipient), with the aim that the message is well understood and produces the desired response. Communicators must have the ability to package messages to suit the characteristics of the communicant and use the appropriate communication media for effective communication. In summary, communicators are message senders who are responsible for conveying and ensuring that messages are delivered correctly so that communication achieves its objectives.

The communicators in the acceleration of stunting reduction in Seram Bagian Timur Regency consist of representatives from various relevant regional government agencies and resource persons in various socialisation programmes on the acceleration of stunting reduction. The results of the study show that the communicators in the Regional Government Agency Forum are those appointed to represent regional government agencies to convey and discuss everything related to the duties and responsibilities as well as proposed activities or innovations from each regional government agency. The communicators representing each OPD have the capacity and credibility of a Head of Service or Head of Division. In Coordination Meetings, Evaluation Meetings, Stunting Discussions, and socialisation, communicators with credibility and capacity are very important because their capacity

enables the results of the meetings to be followed up immediately. One of the requirements for communicators is that they are recognised for their status, power, and authority. Status refers to position or ranking, both in social and organisational structures. Power and authority refer to a person's ability to give rewards and punishments.

Communicators are also seen in the socialisation activities carried out by relevant OPDs aimed at accelerating the reduction of stunting, where the communicators/resource persons presented are competent in their fields and have an understanding and knowledge of their fields so that the information or messages conveyed to the public are relevant and scientifically accountable. In socialisation, the source or communicator must also be credible because sources with high credibility can increase the audience's trust in the information provided. In addition, communicators must have legitimacy or trust from the target community. This can be obtained from their position or institutional role. Trusted communicators will find it easier to influence behavioural change.

## **Messages**

The results of the study show that messages regarding the acceleration of stunting reduction were conveyed through Cross-Sector Coordination and Socialisation activities. In various Cross-Sector Meetings, messages were conveyed through formal communication processes to align perceptions, develop joint strategies, and strengthen the commitment of relevant parties in order to accelerate stunting reduction. The messages conveyed in coordination meetings usually cover important matters such as the purpose of the meeting and policy direction, evaluation of ongoing activities, or division of tasks and other technical directions. In socialisation, messages are conveyed to the community to educate them so that they can change behaviours that contribute to accelerating stunting reduction in Seram Bagian Timur Regency. The messages conveyed through socialisation are the importance of the first 1000 days of life, parenting patterns, reproductive health, the use of local food ingredients as a source of nutritious food, the use of yard space for gardens as a source of food for families, and the creation of healthy homes and healthy residential areas.

Messages are not only a means of conveying information, but also an instrument of social change. According to Pratminingsih (2006), messages are an important part of the communication process and serve to transfer ideas, values, or information from the communicator to the recipient. All good messages must be clear, focused, and relevant. The clarity of the message ensures that the reader does not misunderstand it. The focus of the communication objective is determined by the direction of the message. On the other hand,

the relevance of the message ensures that the information conveyed is appropriate to the context and needs of the recipient. Its relationship to the acceleration of stunting reduction Messages are a core element in the communication process that plays an important role in conveying information, shaping perceptions, and influencing the attitudes and behaviours of the community. Communication messages conveyed to the community and stakeholders must be designed to be clear, focused, and contextual so that they can be well received and understood by the audience or message recipients.

The results of the study show the use of digital and print media in communication regarding the acceleration of stunting reduction. The use of digital media includes the use of projectors and PowerPoint in various TPPS meeting forums. In addition, there is the use of WhatsApp groups as a means of communication between OPDs in the TPPS. The use of print media in accelerating stunting reduction includes books and leaflets aimed at disseminating information and education about stunting, its causes, impacts and prevention to the wider community.

According to Pratminingsih (2006), communication media must be selected based on the characteristics of the audience, the communication objectives, and the social and cultural context in which the communication takes place. The right media can bridge potential communication barriers, such as differences in educational background, literacy levels, and access to technology. The use of digital media in OPD forums, such as the use of projectors and PowerPoint presentations on stunting, allows all parties present to easily and quickly see and understand the content of the message in the form of stunting data. In addition, the use of WhatsApp also makes it easier for all OPDs involved to communicate quickly. This WhatsApp group also functions as a communication forum in addition to Coordination Meetings and Evaluation Meetings, where it becomes an informal forum for discussing interventions from each OPD.

The use of print media in the form of books and leaflets distributed to the community is also one of the steps in accelerating stunting reduction because these books and leaflets serve as a medium for disseminating information about stunting, its causes, impacts, and prevention measures that can be carried out by the community itself at the household level. As stated by Effendy (2011), print media has the advantage of conveying information in a structured manner and can be stored for long-term use. The use of leaflets and pocket books allows the community to read and understand the content of the message according to their abilities and needs. This media is also educational and easily accessible to various groups, including people living in areas with limited access to digital media.

## **Feedback**

The results of the study indicate that there was feedback in various OPD forums and in various socialisation activities regarding the acceleration of stunting reduction carried out by various related OPDs. In OPD forums, this feedback took the form of discussions, exchanges of ideas, and responses to strategies between OPDs, while feedback in socialisation activities was evident from the various questions asked by the audience regarding the material presented. According to Pratminingsih (2006), feedback is a response given by the recipient of a message to the sender in response to the message that has been received. It is emphasised that feedback serves as a measure of the effectiveness of message delivery. It is also emphasised that the existence of feedback creates dialogue-based communication, rather than monologue-based communication. With feedback, the communication process can take place dynamically and adaptively because every message conveyed can be immediately clarified, responded to, or corrected as needed. If the message is well understood by the communicant, there will be responses that show understanding, clarification, or even criticism and suggestions. Effendy (2011) states that feedback is important in two-way communication because it allows for correction, clarification and response from the message recipient to the message sender. Feedback creates interactive discussions between various parties.

In the context of accelerating stunting reduction, meetings and socialisation are not merely activities for conveying information from one party to another, but rather a dialogical process that requires the active involvement of all stakeholders. Therefore, the existence and quality of feedback greatly determines the success of programme implementation. In coordination meetings, feedback serves as an indicator of the extent to which information or policies are understood and accepted by meeting participants from various sectors. When participants provide responses, questions, or criticism, it shows intellectual and emotional engagement with the issues being discussed. Conversely, the absence of feedback can be a sign that communication is not effective or that the material presented has not been understood.

The Stunting Meeting Forum is a space for joint decision-making. Feedback from various parties provides a more comprehensive picture of the situation on the ground, especially regarding the obstacles and potential of each party. By listening to and considering this feedback, the decisions made will be more realistic, contextual, and effectively implementable. Meanwhile, in outreach activities to the community, feedback is a tool to measure the extent to which the information conveyed can be understood and accepted by

the target group. This feedback allows facilitators to assess the effectiveness of the outreach methods used and, if necessary, make adjustments in terms of language, media, and communication approaches.

### **Coordination**

In this study, coordination was assessed using the coordination criteria according to Handayani (2000) as follows:

### **Agreement and Commitment**

The results of the study show that all Regional Apparatus Organisations (OPD) that are members of the TPPS are aware of their duties and responsibilities through Regent Decree No. 121 of 2022, which is followed up with programmes or activities for intervention in accordance with each OPD in order to realise these duties and responsibilities as a form of commitment to the agreed agreement. As stated by Handayani (2000), the creation of agreements between the parties involved is one of the important requirements for effective coordination. A shared understanding of the objectives and strategies as well as the division of roles in the implementation of programmes in cross-sectoral organisations is a sign of agreement. Commitment relates to the willingness to be actively involved, consistently carry out roles and responsibilities, and be loyal to the agreements that have been established together. With the commitment of all relevant parties, efforts to reduce stunting are no longer partial or ceremonial. Instead, these efforts become a structured, measurable, and results-oriented collective movement. This commitment also creates a synergistic and collaborative working atmosphere, where success is not only the achievement of one agency, but the result of the integration of all elements of development.

Handayani (2000) explains that effective coordination not only unites various activities but also unites the goals and ways of thinking between agencies so that agreements are a meeting point for differences and serve to strengthen relationships for cross-sector cooperation. If agreement is successfully achieved, the implementation of activities/programmes will run smoothly, as all parties feel involved and responsible for achieving results. Conversely, if there is no agreement, coordination will experience imbalances and be prone to conflicts of interest or overlapping roles. In Accelerating Stunting Reduction, commitment plays a very important role in determining the success of cross-sectoral programmes, because without strong commitment from each Regional Apparatus Organisation (OPD), cooperation efforts will only become an administrative

routine without having a positive impact. Commitment is demonstrated through active participation in Coordination Meetings, seriousness in implementing specific and sensitive interventions, and willingness to share resources, information, and solutions in addressing obstacles in the field.

### **Competence**

The results of the study found that competence at the TPPS level was good, with the OPDs involved possessing the knowledge, skills, attitude and enthusiasm to carry out interventions. However, obstacles in terms of competence were found at the field implementer level, namely the Posyandu cadres, family planning cadres and KPM (Human Development Cadres). These cadres are still not competent and have a low level of understanding of their duties and responsibilities. In fact, they are the bridge between the government and the community in conveying information, serving directly to the community. This has an impact on the quality of coordination and synergy, because the inability to understand their role or convey information correctly can hinder the intervention. As stated by Sedarmayanti (2011), effective coordination is highly dependent on the competence of human resources. Without sufficient competence, information will not be conveyed completely, policy implementation will be hampered, and cooperation between institutions will tend not to run optimally.

According to Handyaningrat (2000), competence in an organisation not only includes the technical expertise of individuals in carrying out their main tasks and functions (tupoksi), but also includes the capacity to coordinate, communicate, and collaborate effectively within a team framework. In the government bureaucratic system, this competency is key to creating effective coordination and synergy between agencies. In relation to Accelerating Stunting Reduction, competency is not only about technical expertise, such as knowledge of nutrition, sanitation, or maternal and child health, but also about the communicative, coordinative, and collaborative abilities of field implementers. Good competency also enables innovation and solutions to various obstacles that arise during programme implementation. When implementers have analytical, communicative, and collaborative skills, cross-sectoral efforts can be more closely connected, forming a complementary network. Thus, competency is not only an individual factor but also contributes directly to the solidity and effectiveness of cross-sectoral synergy in Accelerating Stunting Reduction.

## **Awareness**

The results of the study show that awareness at the OPD level is quite good, with every OPD included in the TPPS actively participating in Coordination Meetings and carrying out various activities for specific and sensitive interventions. On the other hand, awareness among the community is still lacking. This can be seen from the fact that some people still do not fully understand stunting and its impacts; they still consider stunting to be a non-urgent issue, resulting in low community participation in posyandu. In addition, awareness among village officials is also low, resulting in a low level of involvement from the village administration in encouraging the community to be aware of stunting and visit posyandu. The village government also does not prioritise stunting in its village development plans, compounded by the low level of awareness among posyandu cadres, family planning cadres and KPM cadres regarding their duties and responsibilities. This is due to their low level of understanding and competence in understanding and carrying out their duties and responsibilities.

All of the above problems illustrate that although awareness and intervention from the government in this case, TPPS, is good, it is not yet fully effective without the support and high awareness of the community. The low awareness of these three parties can lead to a breakdown in synergy and coordination at the grassroots level, which should be the main basis for strategies to accelerate stunting reduction. As stated by Handayani (2000), awareness refers to the shared understanding and voluntary attitude of each member of an organisation towards the responsibilities and tasks assigned to them to achieve common goals.

Accelerating the reduction of stunting is a shared responsibility that cannot be borne solely by the health sector. This effort requires strong collaborative work, in which the awareness of every element, including the government, the community, and cadres, becomes the foundation for the successful implementation of the programme. Without widespread and internalised awareness, well-designed interventions risk not having an optimal impact in the field. The awareness of Regional Apparatus Organisations (OPD) is crucial because they are the implementers of cross-sectoral policies. OPD awareness of the importance of programme integration, cross-sectoral coordination, and commitment to stunting reduction targets will determine the direction of regional policies and the consistency of implementation at the grassroots level. Furthermore, public awareness is the most fundamental foundation in shaping behaviours that support child growth and development. Communities that understand the dangers of stunting, the importance of balanced nutrition,

and healthy parenting practices will find it easier to adapt to the programmes offered. Without awareness from within the community, government education and interventions will not yield long-term results. Furthermore, village administrations play an important role as technical implementers at the local level. Village administrations that are aware of the urgency of stunting will be more serious in developing data-based planning, allocating budgets for nutritional interventions, and mobilising the community through village regulations and programmes. Their role is very strategic because they are closer to the community and understand the local socio-cultural context. In addition, the awareness of posyandu cadres, family planning cadres, and human development cadres is the spearhead of implementation in the field. The awareness of cadres of their role as agents of change greatly determines the quality of assistance provided to target families. Cadres who are aware, trained, and have a high sense of concern are able to build strong relationships with the community, monitor child growth regularly, and provide continuous education.

### **Continuity**

The results of the study show that OPDs that are members of TPPS continue to carry out intervention activities on an ongoing basis, even though the scope of intervention is limited due to budget constraints. Continuity in coordination means that the process of communication, implementation of activities, and supervision and evaluation between units or agencies continues to run consistently, without interruption, and is supported by a consistent system. When local governments and related institutions are able to maintain program continuity, whether in the form of regulations, budgets, or field activities, efforts to address stunting will be more stable and focused. However, if the program only runs at the beginning and then weakens due to leadership changes or reduced budget support, the results that have been achieved previously are at risk of being lost or stagnating.

According to Handayani (2000), coordination must be carried out consistently (continuously) so that the objectives of the organisation or programme can be achieved optimally. It is not enough to do it only once or incidentally. In the case of Accelerating Stunting Reduction, the success of cross-sectoral efforts depends heavily on the strength of the collaboration built between the various parties involved, namely health, social, education, and village community empowerment, as well as the participation of the community itself. Addressing the issue of stunting requires a long time because it is a multifaceted problem. Therefore, efforts to overcome this problem must be carried out consistently, continuously, and in an integrated manner, not just ceremonially.

## **Supporting and Hindering Factors in Accelerating Stunting Reduction in East Seram Regency**

### **Supporting Factors**

#### **Support from Local Government Regulations/Policies**

This regulatory support not only emphasises the importance of stunting as a regional development priority, but also strengthens the framework for cross-sectoral coordination. Regulations provide a legal basis and formal commitment from the local government to ensure that all relevant sectors contribute actively and in a coordinated manner. Support from the local government for accelerating stunting reduction in Seram Bagian Timur Regency is manifested in the form of establishing various local regulatory policies in an effort to accelerate stunting reduction in Seram Bagian Timur Regency. Between 2021 and 2024, there are 414 regulatory policies established in Seram Bagian Timur Regency to support efforts to accelerate stunting reduction, namely: Regent Decree No. 121 of 2022 concerning the Formation of the SBT Regency TPPS Team, Regent Decree concerning the SBT Regency Stunting Audit Team (AKS), Joint Statement of Civil Servants concerning Donations for Children with Stunting in SBT Regency, Regent Decree concerning the Formation of Sub-district TPPS in 15 Sub-districts in SBT, Regent Decree on the Formation of Village Family Assistance Teams (TPK) in 198 villages throughout SBT and Village Head Decree on Village TPPS in 198 villages.

#### **TPPS (Stunting Reduction Acceleration Team)**

The formation of the TPPS is a follow-up to Presidential Decree No. 72 of 2021. The formation of the TPPS in Seram Bagian Timur Regency was through Regent Decree No. 121 of 2022. The TPPS brings together various regional apparatus organisations (OPD) and other elements of the regional government to participate in the Acceleration of Stunting Reduction with the following functions: Cross-sector coordination, planning, intervention activity planning and integrated budgeting planning, monitoring and evaluation, capacity building and advocacy, strengthening regional commitment and synergy between central and regional programmes.

#### **Budget Support**

The seriousness of the Seram Bagian Timur Regency local government is also manifested in the form of support for the Regional Revenue and Expenditure Budget (APBD II) policy in the context of efforts to accelerate stunting reduction in Seram Bagian

TimurRegency. Between 2021 and 2024, the Seram Bagian TimurRegency Government has allocated an APBD II budget to continue supporting the Acceleration of Stunting Reduction, as shown in the following table:

**Table 1. Stunting Budget Allocation for 2021-2024**

<b>Year</b>	<b>APBD II Allocation</b>	<b>Description</b>
2021	72,889,304,567	Realisasi
2022	94,892,706,213	Realisasi
2023	62,868,406,521	Realisasi
2024	1,717,109,914	Realisasi
<b>T o t a l</b>	<b>232,367,527,215</b>	

Source : Dinas Pengendalian Penduduk dan KB

### **Specific and Sensitive Intervention Actions by Each Regional Government Agency (OPD)**

The intervention actions taken by each OPD in the effort to accelerate stunting reduction demonstrate active cross-sectoral involvement in accordance with their respective duties and functions.

### **Inhibiting Factors**

#### **Low Human Resources**

In accelerating stunting reduction, Family Planning cadres, Posyandu cadres, and Human Development Cadres (KPM) have a strategic role as the spearhead of basic services to the community. However, in reality, they face limitations and many obstacles, such as low competence and a lack of facilities to support their tasks. Many cadres work voluntarily with minimal incentives, so their motivation and performance are often not optimal. Training and guidance in capacity building for cadres is still uneven. This has resulted in some cadres not having an adequate understanding of stunting indicators, proper parenting, the importance of intervention in the first 1,000 days of life, and the use of data on households at risk of stunting. This condition is further exacerbated by the lack of available health workers such as midwives, posyandu cadres, and competent nutritionists, especially in remote areas.

### **Low Public Awareness**

Some people do not understand stunting, its causes, effects, and prevention. Many parents consider short stature to be a normal genetic trait, rather than a sign of chronic malnutrition. Low nutrition literacy, inappropriate parenting practices, and limited access to accurate information make it difficult for the community to participate in stunting prevention activities such as visiting health posts, utilising health services, nutrition education, and environmental sanitation activities. Other contributing factors include economic and social factors such as poverty, daily workload, and others.

### **Low Awareness Among Village Heads**

The cause of this low awareness is a lack of understanding of the long-term impact of stunting on the quality of human resources. Stunting is still considered solely as a health issue that is the responsibility of health centres or related agencies, rather than a multidimensional problem that concerns social, economic, educational, and welfare aspects of village communities. As a result, attention to stunting prevention programmes, such as strengthening integrated health service posts (Posyandu), providing nutritious food, adequate sanitation, and family nutrition education, is not optimal. In addition, many village heads have not yet prioritised stunting as part of village development. In village planning and budgeting, the Stunting Reduction Acceleration programme often does not receive an adequate portion of the Village Revenue and Expenditure Budget (APBDes). Activities directly related to stunting reduction, such as cadre empowerment, training, procurement of sanitation facilities, or improving access to nutrition, are not included in the development priority scale.

### **Budget constraints**

Regional budget constraints are an obstacle to optimising the implementation of specific and sensitive stunting intervention programmes. As an archipelagic region with geographical challenges and uneven infrastructure, Seram Bagian Timur faces complexities in providing quality basic services, especially in the health, nutrition and sanitation sectors, which are closely related to stunting prevention efforts. The geographical conditions of East Seram, which consists of mountainous areas, coastlines, and small islands that are difficult to reach, result in high operational costs for health activities in the field. Budget constraints also have an impact on the limited health service facilities and infrastructure, as well as a lack of incentives and training for village cadres. This prevents basic nutrition and health

services from running optimally. The interviews also revealed that these budget constraints have led to limited coverage of both specific and sensitive intervention activities.

## **Conclusion**

Synergy in accelerating stunting reduction in Seram Bagian Timur Regency has shown progress through the active role of TPPS in cross-sector communication and coordination, reflecting good institutional commitment. Communication has been quite effective thanks to the involvement of credible communicators, relevant messages, varied media, and fairly good feedback management. However, there are still obstacles such as limited educational media (pocket books and leaflets) and low relevance of audience responses. In terms of coordination, all OPDs in the TPPS understand their respective roles and have demonstrated their commitment through the implementation of specific and sensitive interventions. The TPPS has adequate competence, but implementation in the field is still constrained by the limited capacity of cadres (Posyandu, KB, and Human Development). The awareness of village governments and communities regarding the importance of stunting is also still low. In addition, budget constraints limit the continuity of interventions, compounded by a shortage of health workers (nurses, midwives, nutritionists), which has an impact on service coverage in remote areas. Geographical factors also complicate the implementation of accelerated stunting reduction in this region.

Based on the research findings, strengthening the synergy of accelerating stunting reduction in Seram Bagian Timur Regency can be done through continuous training for Posyandu, family planning, and KPM cadres, providing incentives, and distributing health workers evenly to remote areas. The awareness of village heads needs to be increased through training, mentoring, involvement in stunting forums, and optimisation of the Village Fund. Community participation can be encouraged through educational campaigns during the first 1,000 days of life, strengthening Posyandu, and culture-based local media. Monitoring and evaluation need to be carried out consistently by cross-sector teams at the sub-district and village levels. Local governments are also advised to allocate a special budget so that the programme is sustainable and reaches a wide area. In addition, interventions must consider geographical conditions, such as the provision of sea transportation and home visits to remote areas.

In this study, the theory used to analyse synergies in the implementation of policies to accelerate stunting reduction is still very limited. There are several aspects, such as creativity, trust, and others, that are not analysed using the theory used in this study.

Therefore, further research is recommended to explore synergy in accelerating stunting reduction using other synergy theories or concepts with various other aspects to better understand the factors that support and hinder synergy in accelerating stunting reduction.

### **Acknowledgent**

The author would like to express his deepest gratitude and appreciation to his supervisor for providing guidance, advice, and support during the process of writing this journal. The author would also like to thank all informants who have taken the time to provide information and share their valuable experiences in this research. Last but not least, the author would like to express his deepest gratitude to his beloved parents for their prayers, encouragement, and love, which have always been a source of strength in completing this scientific work. It is hoped that the results of this research can make a positive contribution to the development of science and public policy, particularly in efforts to accelerate the reduction of stunting in disadvantaged areas.

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