



# The Strategic Role of The Pasangkayu District Government in Handling Stunting Symptoms

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## INFO ARTICLE

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## ABSTRACT

Stunting is a condition of malnutrition in toddlers characterized by delayed growth and height not in accordance with age and can be influenced by several factors such as nutrition, digestive infections, low birth weight, and environmental health. This study aims to determine the state of stunting in Pasangkayu Regency, Polewali Village, which has a remote indigenous community, the Bunggu tribe. This research also wants to know the national strategic plan for stunting reduction. The method used is descriptive research with a qualitative approach. The descriptive-qualitative method is a research method used to examine the condition of natural objects. The results showed that remote indigenous communities are inseparable from the problems of remoteness and poverty, which are very complex problems. The reality of remote indigenous peoples who are still very difficult to get access to, resulting in the interaction of community behavior being indifferent in paying attention to life problems, especially from the health aspect, one of which is the problem of stunting, while the national strategic plan in implementing the acceleration of national stunting reduction refers as mandated by Presidential Decree 72 of 2021.



## INTRODUCTION

Remote indigenous communities still face some serious problems today, as they do not enjoy the educational facilities, health services, and other accessibility available in modern times (Sujarwani et al., 2018). Geographical remoteness has the consequence of limiting access for remote indigenous communities to various social, economic, and health services in order to fulfill their basic needs. With geographical remoteness, these communities experience limitations in reaching other areas to fulfill their needs (Suyanto, 2015). The issue of remoteness and poverty is a very complex problem that is influenced by various interrelated factors and is a global problem that is not only felt by one particular community in a country. This can be seen from various factors, such as low quality of education, low health status, an uninhabitable living environment, and a high level of risk of hunger (Nulhaqim, 2019).

Based on the reality of remote indigenous peoples who are still very difficult to get easy access to, the behavioral interactions of remote indigenous peoples become indifferent to paying attention to various life problems, especially the health aspect, resulting in various adverse effects, one of which is the problem of stunting. Stunting is basically a major nutritional problem that will have an impact on social and economic life in society (Dewey & Begum, 2011). Stunting, or short stature, is one of the public health problems, especially in this study looking at the remoteness of remote indigenous communities that are far from easy access. Handling the problem of stunting is still ongoing because its prevalence is still quite high, especially in developing countries, especially in Indonesia.

Stunting is a consequence of several factors that are often associated with poverty, including nutrition, health, sanitation, and the environment. There are five main factors that cause stunting: poverty, social and cultural factors, increased exposure to infectious diseases, food insecurity, and community access to health services (Ministry of Health, 2013). Stunting can have long-term effects in terms of health, education, the economy, society, and so on. Even this stunting problem can affect productivity issues in the future. Stunted toddlers tend to have difficulty achieving optimal growth and development potential both physically and psychomotorly (Dewey & Begum, 2011). The World Health Organization (WHO) estimates the prevalence of stunting worldwide to be 22 percent, or 149.2 million, by 2020. WHO is committed to supporting all countries to expand access to essential nutrition services.

Based on data from the Indonesian Toddler Nutrition Status Survey (ITNSS) in 2021, the prevalence of stunting is currently still at 24.4 percent, or 5.33 million toddlers (<https://www.kemendiknas.go.id/>, on February 28, 2022, at 09.49 Wita). Referring to West Sulawesi Province, where this research will be conducted, based on the results of the 2021 nutritional status study (NSS), the prevalence of stunting among children under five in West Sulawesi was 33.8 percent. The district with the highest prevalence of stunting in West Sulawesi is Polman District, reaching 36 percent, followed by Majene District, reaching 35.7 percent. In addition, Mamasa district reached 33.7 percent, Mamuju district reached 30.3 percent, Pasangkayu district reached 28.6 percent, and Central Mamuju district reached 26.3 percent.

Stunting is not limited to rural or remote areas, but also occurs in urban regions. The occurrence of stunting in toddlers, both in rural and urban areas, is attributed to factors such as low maternal education, family income, maternal knowledge about nutrition, exclusive breastfeeding practices, timing of complementary feeding introduction, zinc adequacy, iron adequacy, history of infections, and genetic factors from parents. However, maternal employment status, family size, immunization status, energy adequacy, and low birth weight do not affect stunting. Protein and calcium adequacy in rural areas show a significant relationship, whereas in urban areas, no such relationship is observed. Furthermore, the most influential factor for stunting in toddlers, whether in rural or urban areas, remains the adequacy of zinc (Farah et al., 2014). This data picture shows that there is still a need for serious handling in the prevention of prolonged stunting. In simple terms, it can also be seen that even urban areas with close and easy access to needs still have stunting rates, especially in remote indigenous communities.

Based on this, researchers chose a research location in Pasangkayu Regency, precisely in Polewali Village, especially for remote indigenous communities. Bunggu tribe because it is the smallest and most vital



part of the region in terms of intervention to prevent this problem. The Bunggu tribe itself has existed for hundreds of years, inhabiting mountainous areas and mountain slopes in the interior of Pasangkayu Regency. This research is to look at the awareness and behavior of remote indigenous communities towards stunting issues and will examine in depth the implementation of the government's strategic plan related to stunting prevention in Polewali Village.

## THEORY REVIEW

### Stunting

Stunting is caused by multidimensional factors, namely poor parenting practices, limited quality health and early learning services, a lack of access to nutritious food, and a lack of access to clean water and sanitation. Handling stunting requires coordination between sectors and involves various stakeholders, such as the central government, local governments, business and industry, and the general public. The President and Vice President are also committed to directly leading efforts to tackle stunting so that the reduction in stunting prevalence can be accelerated and can occur evenly throughout Indonesia. The government has established a stunting prevention policy through Presidential Decree No. 42 of 2013 concerning the National Movement for the Acceleration of Nutrition with a focus on the first 1000 days of life, as follows (Ministry of Health, 2013):

- a. Pregnant women receive a minimum of 90 tablets during pregnancy.
- b. Supplementary feeding for pregnant women.
- c. Nutrition fulfillment.
- d. Delivery with a skilled doctor or midwife.
- e. Provision of early breastfeeding initiation.
- f. Exclusive breastfeeding for infants up to 6 months of age.
- g. Providing complementary foods for infants up to 2 years old.
- h. Providing complete basic immunization and vitamin A.
- i. Monitoring toddler growth at the nearest posyandu.
- j. Implementation of Clean and Healthy Living Behaviors.

### Remote Indigenous Community

Komunitas Adat Terpencil (KAT) is a socio-cultural group that is local and dispersed and is less or not yet involved in social, economic, and political networks and services (Presidential Decree No. 111/1999). This definition implies that the community is understood as a community that has a particular culture or custom that is different or unique. So it is often equated with the original local community, which has various advantages that must be maintained, such as cooperation, culture, solidarity, and social interaction. Communities are less involved in social, economic, and political service networks.

### Food consumption patterns

Consumption patterns are human needs in the form of objects and services that are allocated in addition to personal and family interests based on the system of relationships and responsibilities that are realized as primary and secondary needs (Shania Lintang, Dkk, 2019). In general, a person's consumption pattern is determined by their level of income, whether low or high. Fulfillment of consumption also always faces various obstacles, for example, the number of family members, access to fulfillment of needs, and so on. Consumption patterns are very impactful on family life because they are the main staple of life itself. The behavioral pattern of household food consumption is very important because it will affect the adequacy of nutrition, calories, health, and the growth and development of a community. Excessive food consumption that only relies on one type of food will cause the body to face various health problems, such as obesity, which has implications for the emergence of heart disease, cholesterol, and so on. Conversely, if the calories consumed are insufficient and not varied, it will cause various diseases, especially malnutrition, which can interfere with the growth of adolescents and children, even though the growth and development of children and adolescents is a very important asset for the growth of a country (Tuti Ernawati, 2017).



## METHODOLOGY

This research is descriptive research with a qualitative approach. The qualitative descriptive method is a research method used to research natural object conditions (as opposed to experiments), where the researcher is the key instrument, data collection techniques are triangulated (combined), data analysis is inductive/qualitative, and qualitative research results emphasize meaning rather than generalization. Qualitative descriptive research aims to describe, describe, explain, explain, and answer in more detail the problems to be studied by studying as closely as possible an individual, a group, or an event. In qualitative research, humans are research instruments, and the results of the writing are in the form of words or statements that are in accordance with the actual situation (Sugiyono, 2016), in this case related to family food consumption patterns in remote indigenous communities experiencing stunting in Polewali Village, Bambalamotu District, Pasangkayu Regency.

## DISCUSSION

### Behavior of the Remote Indigenous Community (Suku Bunggu)

The Bunggu tribe is a portrait of cultural wealth that must be preserved. This tribe, which lives in a mountainous area in North Mamuju, has various uniqueness, which is rarely done by most humans. This tribe lives on trees and utilizes nature as a source of livelihood (Quranul Hidayah, 2017). Since hundreds of years ago, until the nineties, the Bunggu tribe inhabited the mountainous areas and mountain slopes in the interior of North Mamuju Regency and until now the Bunggu tribe is spread across (three) sub-districts, six villages, and 12 hamlets consisting of 1500 families and 3000 people. This tribe has its roots in the Kaili tribe in Central Sulawesi. The Kaili ancestors then spread to a number of areas and formed new settlements. From there, several new tribes emerged, such as the Bunggu, Da'a, and other tribes.

The Bunggu tribe actually lives by building houses on trees. But along with the passage of time, the number of tree houses has decreased because they began to build simple houses that utilize natural products, such as poles from round logs and rattan to bind the components of the house. The bronze tribe's house measures 4x6 meters with a height of 2–3 meters. The house is divided into two rooms, namely to receive guests and a place to rest and cook. This tribe is also known as nomadic, or moving. The house they live in only lasts up to 6 months. After that, they look for land to build a new settlement. The new location is usually about 5-7 kilometers from the previous settlement. Another uniqueness of this tribe is that they will leave settlements that they consider no longer "friendly". This happens if one of their members is sick or dies.

This tribe also maintains customary law. It is this law that regulates all members of the tribe so as not to behave deviantly. Punishment is given by prioritizing deliberation in a traditional house called Bantaya. One of the punishments is to pay a fine, which is adjusted to the mistake made. The people of the Bunggu tribe have their own culture and customs, which they adhere to from generation to generation and are carried out during the traditional ritual ceremonies of opening fields, harvesting, and medical ceremonies such as the Vunja and Reego events. Vunja is a Thanksgiving feast after they harvest their fields and gardens. Reego is a party held to celebrate the birthdays of their children who have reached the age of toddlers.

The Bunggu tribe also has Vuya Tea, an interesting cultural heritage to preserve. Vuya tea is a cloth made from bark. Unfortunately, the tradition of making cloth from the bark of this tree is becoming increasingly rare. Now the number of Vuya tea makers can be counted on the fingers of the elderly. No more young people from this community learn to make Vuya tea. The human life of the Bunggu tribe is faced with access to remoteness and backwardness from human life in general. So their behavior is still very far from the modernity of life and the rapid development of the times. This then becomes two different sides. The first side is that the traditionalism of the Bunggu tribe deserves appreciation because they still cling to customs and are able to survive the constraints of the times. However, on the other hand, it makes them far from access to livability, for example, in terms of education and especially health. This then makes them a vulnerable community.



### **Stunting in Pasangkayu Regency, Polewali Village (Bunggu Tribe)**

Komunitas Adat Terpencil (KAT) are socio-cultural groups that geographically reside in remote areas in several regions of Indonesia. This condition results in limitations in accessing various basic social services such as health, education, transportation, and information coming from outside their community. These limitations show that KAT is still lagging behind in the field of social welfare development. The cultural environment will greatly influence human behavior, resulting in a diversity of behaviors, including clean and healthy lifestyle behaviors. The community's healthy living behavior is determined by the extent of the community's understanding of healthy living behavior and its benefits. Clean and healthy lifestyles in society are the result of a process of imitation for generations. The idea of imitation of clean and healthy lifestyles as an approach from below, bottom up, wants to say that in every cultural society there are substantial values that become the strength so that the community can survive for generations. These values, from the perspective of cultural interpretation, can be said to be the local wisdom of cultural communities that function to maintain the continuity and growth of their lives (Gunarsa, S. D. 2012).

The need for counseling to increase women's knowledge about the health benefits and safety information related to daily physical activity among the Taburta Tribe during pregnancy This is in line with the research of Melton et al.: in rural America, physical activity during pregnancy reduces the risk of gestational diabetes, so that overweight people are more likely to have overweight children (Melton B. Dkk, 2013). Remote access and the cultural environment will greatly affect human behavior, especially for remote indigenous communities, making their lives vulnerable to various diseases, in this case stunting. In West Sulawesi, the stunting prevalence is 33.8 percent, making West Sulawesi the highest stunting prevalence nationally. While Pasangkayu Regency itself is 28.6 percent, although it is not the highest in West Sulawesi Province, it is quite crucial and makes the region still a scourge of stunting in children, especially for remote indigenous communities, which in reality are still very underdeveloped, especially in Polewali Village, where there is a Bunggu tribe that is included in remote indigenous communities and should be given more attention regarding access to health.

### **National Stunting Reduction Acceleration Implementation Plan**

The issue of stunting is a crucial problem to be addressed immediately, as the mandate of Presidential Decree 72 of 2021 has emphasized the strategic plan for accelerating stunting reduction, which will then be implemented in all regions of Indonesia. The pillars of the national strategy for accelerating stunting reduction are organized into five points, including:

- a. Increased commitment and vision of leadership in ministries and institutions, provincial governments, district and city governments, and village governments;
- b. Increased communication about behavior change and community empowerment;
- c. Increased convergence of specific and sensitive interventions in ministries and institutions, provincial governments, district and municipal governments, and village governments;
- d. Improved food security and nutrition at the individual, family, and community levels;
- e. Strengthening and developing systems, data, information, research, and innovation.

The implementation goals of Presidential Regulation 72 of 2021, a nationwide initiative, encompass several key aspects; Firstly, it aims to diminish the prevalence of stunting across the country, addressing this pressing issue comprehensively. Secondly, it seeks to enhance the preparation for family life, ultimately raising the overall quality of family experiences and dynamics. Thirdly, the regulation strives to guarantee the fulfillment of adequate nutritional intake for all, especially focusing on vulnerable populations. Fourthly, it aims to foster better parenting practices, contributing to healthier child development and growth. Furthermore, the regulation endeavors to bolster both access to and the quality of healthcare services, ensuring that all citizens receive the medical attention they need. Lastly, it focuses on augmenting access to clean drinking water and improved sanitation facilities, which are crucial components for overall public health and well-being. By





addressing these multifaceted objectives, the regulation aspires to create a positive and lasting impact on the nation's health, well-being, and quality of life.

In the broader context, the national action plan encompasses a range of strategic components. These components consist of the provision of essential data regarding families susceptible to stunting, enabling a targeted and effective approach. Concurrently, the plan involves extending crucial assistance to these vulnerable families, aiding in their efforts to combat stunting. Additionally, support is directed towards all potential brides, ensuring that maternal health and nutrition are addressed comprehensively. To guarantee the plan's effectiveness, continuous surveillance of families facing the risk of stunting is implemented, allowing for prompt interventions and adjustments as needed. Furthermore, a comprehensive audit of stunting cases is conducted, enhancing the understanding of the underlying factors and facilitating evidence-based policymaking. Collectively, these components form a cohesive strategy that strives to address stunting comprehensively, promoting healthier lives and brighter futures for all.

## CONCLUSION

The cultural environment and family food consumption patterns will greatly affect human life and human behavior. Food needs, for example, are basic consumption needs for each individual. Food must be available every day so that the individual has sufficient energy reserves to carry out daily activities. Food security stability must be maintained on an ongoing basis. The human life of the Bunggu tribe, for example, deals with access to remoteness and backwardness from human life in general. So that their behavior is still very far from the modernity of life from the rapid development of the times This then makes them a vulnerable society.

The prevalence of stunting among toddlers in West Sulawesi is 33.8 percent. Pasangkayu Regency itself is 28.6 percent, although it is not the highest in West Sulawesi Province, but the lift is quite crucial and makes the region still a scourge of stunting in children, especially for remote indigenous communities, which in reality are still very underdeveloped, especially in Polewali Village, where there is a Bunggu tribe that is included in remote indigenous communities and should be given more attention regarding access to health.

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