



## **EVALUATION OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STUNTING MANAGEMENT PROGRAM IN PUSONG BARU VILLAGE BANDA SAKTI DISTRICT LHOKSEUMAWE CITY**

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### **Abstract**

*This research is entitled "Evaluation of the Implementation of the Stunting Management Program in Pusong Baru Village, Banda Sakti District, Lhokseumawe City". The background of this study is the high prevalence of stunting in the area. The objective is to evaluate the implementation of the program and identify inhibiting factors in stunting prevention. The study applied a descriptive qualitative method with data collected through observation, interviews, and documentation. The analysis was carried out using Theodoulou and Kofinis' policy evaluation theory, which includes process, outcome, and impact evaluation. The findings indicate that, in terms of process, the program has been implemented through interventions targeting adolescent girls, pregnant women, and toddlers. Activities include iron and folic acid supplementation, nutrition education, growth monitoring at community health posts, and provision of supplementary food. In terms of outcomes, there has been an improvement in nutritional awareness, though uneven due to limited access to health posts and low participation of mothers and children. Meanwhile, the long-term impact remains less significant, as stunting rates are still relatively high. Barriers to implementation include limited resources, ineffective management, and inadequate infrastructure. Therefore, more optimal, integrated, and sustainable strategies are required to ensure the program reaches all target groups and successfully reduces stunting in New Pusong Village.*

**Keywords:** Evaluation, Stunting Management, New Pusong Village

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## INTRODUCTION

Stunting remains a major challenge to human resource development in Indonesia. This condition occurs when children experience stunted growth due to prolonged malnutrition, particularly from pregnancy to age two. Children who develop optimal growth will face challenges competing in the future.

The Indonesian government has implemented various stunting reduction programs, both directly through supplementary feeding and health checks for pregnant women and toddlers, and indirectly through improved sanitation, clean water access, and nutrition education. These efforts involve health workers, cadres, community leaders, and village governments, making cross-sector collaboration a key factor in reducing stunting prevalence. However, implementation often faces challenges, such as limited understanding, limited human resources, and low public awareness. Therefore, evaluation is necessary to assess program effectiveness and identify obstacles that must be addressed.

According to Djaali and Muljono (2004:1), evaluation is the process of assessing something based on predetermined criteria or objectives, followed by decision-making regarding the object being evaluated.

Presidential Regulation Number 72 of 2021 concerning the Acceleration of Stunting Reduction states that stunting is a disruption in child growth and development due to chronic malnutrition and recurrent infections, characterized by height or length below the standards set by the minister responsible for government health affairs.

Aceh Governor Regulation Number 14 of 2019 Concerning Integrated Stunting Prevention and Management in Aceh. Article 1, point 5 of the general provisions states, "Integrated stunting prevention and management is a focal point for districts/cities and stakeholders in implementing integrated nutrition interventions for stunting prevention and reduction," and point 7 states, "Stakeholders are all parties related to issues that can influence and be influenced by service activities related to stunting prevention and management efforts."

Table 1. Number of Stunting Children in Lhokseumawe City

Year	Number of Stunting Children
2020	2.061
2021	2.191
2022	2.307
2023	2.490
2024	2.813

*Source: Lhokseumawe City Health Office 2025*

Pusong Baru Village, an area in Lhokseumawe City with a relatively high stunting rate, is a key indicator of a serious nutritional problem that has been present since early childhood. Children with stunting experience stunted growth, not only in terms of physical growth but also in their intellectual development, which can impact their future abilities.

If this situation persists, it will have long-term impacts on the community. Productivity can decline because the younger generation is not growing healthily and strongly, ultimately hampering economic development in the village. Furthermore, the risk of poverty can increase because employment and development opportunities are more limited for stunted children. This issue is clearly not just a health issue, but also a threat to the community's economic future and quality of life.

## METHOD

### Research Location

This research was conducted in Gampong Pusong Baru, Banda Sakti District, Lhokseumawe City. This village still experiences high rates of stunting among toddlers, despite several health programs to address stunting. Therefore, the researchers were interested in understanding the implementation of stunting management programs in Gampong Pusong Baru, Banda Sakti District, Lhokseumawe City.

### Research Approach

This research uses a qualitative research method with a descriptive approach, which aims to gain in-depth understanding of a phenomenon by collecting facts and information related to the research focus.

### Data Collection Techniques

Data collection techniques ensure that the collected data accurately depicts the situation on the ground, helps solve problems, and generates conclusions. The data collection techniques used in this study are:

a. Observation

According to Marshall in Sugiyono (2020:106), through observation, researchers learn about behavior and the meaning of that behavior. The most important observation technique is to rely on the researcher's own observations and memory. To facilitate this, media such as notes and electronic devices such as recorders and cameras are used. In this case, researchers conduct direct observations in the field by observing the situation and listening directly to informants.

b. Interviews

According to Sugiyono (2020:114), interviews are a data collection technique used by researchers to identify research problems and to gain deeper insights and a wider range of respondents. Using this interview technique, researchers ask a number of in-depth questions to relevant informants or parties related to the problem being studied.

c. Documentation

Documentation refers to the collection of images, recordings, and documents from the research location. According to Sugiyono (2020:124), documentation complements the use of observation and interview methods in qualitative research. These documents include official documents, articles, journals, archives, biographies, and other materials. Documentation involves taking photographs and recordings of interviews with informants.

### Data Analysis Techniques

Data analysis is the process of examining, cleaning, transforming, and modeling data with the aim of finding useful information that can guide researchers in making decisions regarding research questions. According to Sugiyono (2021:321), data analysis techniques are the process of systematically searching, compiling, and organizing data. The collected data can include field notes and researcher comments, images/photos, documents, reports, articles, and so on. The data analysis activities in this study were carried out using the following steps:

a. Data Reduction

Data reduction is a form of analysis that sharpens, classifies, directs, removes unnecessary information, and organizes data in such a way that final conclusions can be drawn. According to Sugiyono (2021:325), data reduction is a sensitive thinking process that requires intelligence and a high degree of breadth and depth of insight.

b. Data Presentation

Data presentation is the process of organizing a collection of information to allow for conclusions to be drawn. Qualitative data presentations include narrative text (field notes), matrices, graphs, networks, and charts. According to Sugiyono (2021:325), in qualitative research, data presentation can take the form of brief descriptions, charts, relationships between categories, flowcharts, and the like. Presenting data makes it easier to understand what is happening and plan further work based on this understanding.

c. Drawing Conclusions

Drawing conclusions is a qualitative data analysis technique. Conclusions are the results of the analysis that can be used to take action. According to Sugiyono (2021:329), conclusions in qualitative research are new, previously unseen findings, either in the form of a description or depiction of an object that was previously obscure or unclear, but which becomes clear after further investigation. These findings can be in the form of causal relationships or interactions, hypotheses, or theories.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### 1. Evaluation of the Implementation of the Stunting Handling Program in Pusong Baru Village, Banda Sakti District, Lhokseumawe City

Evaluation is a systematic process for assessing an activity, program, or policy to determine the extent to which its stated objectives have been achieved. Evaluation focuses not only on the final outcome but also includes a review of the implementation process, any obstacles encountered, and the impact on the target population or community. Therefore, evaluation plays a crucial role as a basis for decision-making, re-planning, and future policy or program improvements.

Stunting is a chronic nutritional problem that remains a serious challenge in various regions in Indonesia, including Lhokseumawe City. Stunting not only impacts children's physical growth but also has long-term consequences for cognitive development, productivity, and future health. Therefore, the central and regional governments are implementing various stunting management programs aimed at reducing the prevalence of stunting, particularly during the First 1,000 Days of Life (HPK).

The Lhokseumawe City Government has issued a policy for handling stunting in Lhokseumawe City, namely Lhokseumawe Mayor Regulation Number 32 of 2021 concerning Integrated Stunting Prevention and Management in Lhokseumawe City. This Mayoral Regulation aims to: (a) increase the understanding of all relevant stakeholders and the community regarding their participation in integrated stunting prevention and management; (b) serve as a guideline and guideline for the City in implementing integrated interventions for stunting prevention and management; and (c) determine priorities for handling stunting issues, among others.

Table 2. Summary of Child Nutritional Status in Pusong Baru Village from January to July 2025

	Child Nutritional Status	Bulan						
		J	F	M	A	M	J	J
TB/U	SK	4	4	2	4	6	7	6
	K	10	10	10	10	10	12	12
	N	21	20	22	22	20	17	16
BB/U	SP	9	9	9	11	11	8	8
	P	26	25	25	25	25	28	26
TB/BB	RGL	3	4	4	5	5	5	5
	GK	2	3	3	4	6	6	6
	N	30	27	27	26	25	24	23
	GB	-	-	-	1	-	1	-

Source: Mon Geudong Health Center, Lhokseumawe City 2025

Based on the table above, most children are in the normal category in terms of both height and weight. However, there are several important findings that need to be considered. In the Height/Age indicator, the number of children with very short (SK) and stunting (K) status remains quite significant. For example, from January to April, very short children ranged from 2–4 children, but increased to 6 children in May and even 7 children in June. Furthermore, the stunting (K) category is relatively stable at around 10–12 children each month. This indicates the potential for long-term nutritional deficiencies that impact growth. Meanwhile, the normal (N) category in Height/Age remains dominant each month, although it tends to decrease from 22 children in March to 16 children in July. Meanwhile, the very short (SP) status is quite stable, ranging from 8–11 children, with the highest increase occurring in April and May. In the Weight/Age indicator, most children are in normal weight (N), although the number of children with underweight (P) remains quite high and consistent, at around 25–28 children

each month. Meanwhile, the category of overweight and obesity (RGL) increased from 3 children in January to 5 children from April to July. The category of underweight and obesity (GK) also increased, from 2 children in January to 6 children from May to July, indicating a trend that requires attention. For the weight/height indicator, there were no cases of malnutrition (GB) in most months, except in April and June, which recorded 1 child experiencing malnutrition each. Although the numbers are small, this remains an important warning for immediate preventive measures and further treatment.

### 1. Process Evaluation

This evaluation is a crucial step in assessing the success of a program, including the stunting management program, which is currently a national priority. Process evaluation not only aims to determine whether the program is running smoothly but also to explore how the program's stages are planned, implemented, and monitored, as well as the extent of involvement of relevant stakeholders.

Based on the researchers' observations, process evaluation of the stunting management program actually begins not only at birth but much earlier, even during adolescence. Adolescent girls are considered crucial because they are the future mothers who will give birth to the next generation. Therefore, they are routinely given iron supplements to prevent anemia and are educated on the importance of balanced nutrition and a healthy lifestyle. When a woman enters pregnancy, attention to nutritional intake is further strengthened through the provision of nutritious supplements, regular monitoring of the mother and fetus' health at the integrated health post (Posyandu) or community health center (Puskesmas), and mentoring to ensure the mother understands how to maintain her own health and that of her unborn child. After the baby is born, the role of the Posyandu becomes even more crucial, as it is there that the toddler's growth and development are routinely monitored, from measuring weight and height to monitoring the child's eating habits. Toddlers are also provided with nutritious supplementary foods to ensure their nutritional needs are met and to prevent



malnutrition, which can lead to stunting. This series of efforts demonstrates that stunting prevention is a long journey that must begin as early as possible, be implemented in stages, and involve various parties, with the hope that Indonesian children can grow up healthy, intelligent, and ready to compete in the future.

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## **2. Evaluation of Results**

When assessing the success of a program, it's not just field data that is considered, but also the values that influence how the results are assessed. Based on evaluation theory, it can be concluded that the stunting management program in Gampong Pusong Baru has been running according to its objectives. However, concrete

evidence is needed to demonstrate that the program is truly capable of addressing the stunting problem.

A program is considered successful if there are visible changes, such as improvements in children's nutritional status, a reduction in stunting rates, and an increase in community knowledge and behavior regarding health and nutrition. To measure this success, regular monitoring of program outcomes is necessary.

The program's implementation so far has shown quite positive initial results, evident in increased nutritional awareness among some residents, who are beginning to understand the importance of a healthy diet and the nutritional needs for child growth and development. However, this achievement is still not evenly distributed across the community. Some groups still lack adequate information or access to resources to support healthy lifestyles, preventing the program's benefits from being fully realized. Furthermore, accessibility to integrated health service posts (Posyandu) remains a major obstacle, both due to the distance from some residents' homes and the limited availability of facilities and healthcare personnel. The low level of maternal and child participation in integrated health service posts (Posyandu), which should be the primary means of accessing basic health services and nutrition counseling, has resulted in the program's overarching goal of improving public health equitably through monitoring child nutrition and growth. This has not been fully achieved and requires improvements in access, outreach, and collective awareness at the family and community levels.

## **3. Evaluasi Dampak**

Using this approach, the evaluation not only measures whether activities have been implemented but also assesses the extent to which these activities have had a positive impact on increasing community awareness, changing family nutritional behavior, and improving children's nutritional status. Impact evaluation is important because it provides a comprehensive picture of the program's success or failure in terms of direct and sustainable benefits to the community. The results of this evaluation can be used as a basis for decision-making for policy improvements, more appropriate resource allocation, and the development of more effective strategies to ensure that the stunting management program truly

delivers significant and sustainable changes in Gampong Pusong Baru.

The stunting management program in Gampong Pusong Baru has not yet had a significant long-term impact on the community. Although some progress has been seen in improving the nutrition of some children, particularly those who receive direct interventions such as supplemental nutritious food intake and regular health monitoring, the overall stunting rate in the village remains relatively high. This indicates that the efforts undertaken have not been able to fully address the root causes of the problem, such as parents' low knowledge of parenting patterns and balanced nutrition, limited access to health facilities, and the still-weak socioeconomic conditions of families. Therefore, the existing program still requires evaluation and strengthening, both in terms of strategy, funding, and active community participation, to sustainably reduce stunting rates and have a tangible impact on the quality of life of future generations in Gampong Pusong Baru.

## **2. Obstacles to the Implementation of the Stunting Handling Program in Pusong Baru Village, Banda Sakti District, Lhokseumawe City**

An obstacle or constraint is anything that can hinder the smooth implementation of a program or policy. In the context of the stunting management program in Gampong Pusong Baru, these obstacles can stem from various factors, both from the program implementers and from the community as beneficiaries. The stunting management program implemented in Gampong Pusong Baru has had a positive impact, particularly in raising mothers' awareness of the importance of nutrition and child health. Many residents have benefited from the counseling, supplementary feeding, and the availability of integrated health service posts (Posyandu).

However, the program's success cannot be said to be fully optimal. During its implementation, various shortcomings have been identified that create obstacles and leave some residents feeling dissatisfied with the results. These challenges include limited resources, ineffective management capabilities, and inadequate infrastructure.

Through the evaluation process, these obstacles can be more clearly identified, both from the program implementers and the community itself. Therefore, improvements and increased effectiveness of program implementation are

essential to better achieve the primary goal of reducing stunting rates in the future.

### **1. Resource**

The limited number of health workers, cadres, and nutrition officers poses a significant challenge to improving public health. This situation is exacerbated by the suboptimal training that should strengthen the capacity of field personnel. As a result, the dissemination of health-related information and comprehensive community support cannot be maximized. These obstacles not only slow the delivery of vital information but also affect the health services received by the community, particularly in the prevention and management of nutritional issues.

### **2. Management Skills**

Coordination between relevant agencies has not been optimal, resulting in frequent overlapping activities and delays in program implementation. Furthermore, available village fund allocations have not been optimally utilized to support priority activities, particularly those related to maternal health and toddler development. Counseling activities, which should be the primary means of increasing public knowledge and awareness, have also not been fully effective, as the target audience remains limited and the delivery methods are not entirely engaging or easy to understand. This situation has resulted in relatively low levels of behavioral change in the community, particularly among pregnant women and families with toddlers, thus preventing the goal of improving public health from being optimally achieved.

### **3. Infrastructure availability**

While health facilities and supporting infrastructure at integrated health posts (Posyandu) are quite helpful in providing basic services to the community, their availability remains uneven across regions, leaving certain groups unable to fully benefit from them. Furthermore, access to clean water and sanitation remains limited, impacting overall public health. This situation is further exacerbated by the lack of educational resources, which should play a crucial role in increasing public knowledge and awareness about health, nutrition, and a clean and healthy lifestyle. Consequently, efforts to reach all levels of society and improve health have not been fully implemented and require more serious attention from various parties.

## CONCLUSION

The discussion concludes that the stunting management program in Gampong Pusong Baru is implemented by considering three indicators: process, outcomes, and impact. From a process perspective, the program begins with adolescent girls, pregnant women, and toddlers through the provision of iron supplements, nutrition education, routine check-ups at integrated health posts (Posyandu), and supplementary feeding. However, not all residents actively participate. Results indicate an increase in nutritional awareness among some residents, but this is not evenly distributed due to limited access to Posyandu and low participation by mothers and children, resulting in the program's objectives not being fully achieved. In terms of impact, despite improvements in nutrition among some children, the overall stunting rate remains quite high. Therefore, the program has not had a significant long-term impact, and a better strategy is needed to ensure more equitable and sustainable results.

The study identified several key obstacles to the implementation of the stunting management program in Gampong Pusong baru, banda sakti district, lhokseumawe city, including limited resources, ineffective management capabilities and inadequate infrastructure availability.

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