

**THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE FAMILY ASSISTANCE TEAM
PROGRAM POLICY IN HELPING REDUCE STUNTING RATES IN THE
GUNUNGGURUH DISTRICT, SUKABUMI REGENCY.**

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ABSTRACT

The *TPK* consists of a group of personnel including Midwives, Family Welfare Program Cadres, and Family Planning Cadres to provide assistance such as counseling, referral services facilitation, and facilitating the acceptance of social assistance programs for prospective brides/couples of reproductive age, pregnant women, postpartum mothers, children aged 0-59 months, as well as conducting surveillance of families at risk of stunting to early detect stunting risk factors. However, in its implementation, there are several issues such as the insufficient number of healthcare personnel in each village team, the increasing cases of stunting in the Gunungguruh District, and the suboptimal performance of *TPK*. Based on these phenomena, the researchers are interested in analyzing the effectiveness of *TPK* implementation, especially in the Gunungguruh District, using qualitative descriptive methods. The researchers use Matland's theory, employing indicators such as policy appropriateness, implementation appropriateness, target appropriateness, environmental appropriateness, and process appropriateness. This study uses purposive sampling with 12 informants consisting of local government officials, district officials, village officials, and community members, employing data collection techniques including interviews, literature reviews, and observations. The analysis results according to Matland's theory lead to the conclusion that the *TPK* Program Policy implemented in the Gunungguruh District, Sukabumi Regency, generally has not been effective. Factors hindering the implementation of the *TPK* program include budget constraints, lack of community awareness, minimal training implementation, and suboptimal coordination among relevant agencies. Efforts to improve the

implementation of the *TPK* program include increasing the budget, raising community awareness, enhancing knowledge and training, and improving coordination among relevant agencies.

Key words: *Program Effectiveness, Family Assistance Team Program, reducing stunting rates, Gunungguruh District*

A. INTRODUCTION

Stunting is one of the crucial nutritional problems, especially in poor and developing countries. Stunting is a form of growth failure that causes linear growth disturbances in toddlers due to prolonged accumulation of nutritional deficiencies, starting from pregnancy to 24 months of age. Malnutrition during early childhood growth will inhibit physical development, increase morbidity, hinder children's mental development, and even cause death. Toddlers experiencing stunting problems are at risk of decreased intellectual abilities, productivity, and potential risk of degenerative diseases in the future. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), the standard for child growth is based on the length-for-age (LAZ) or height-for-age (HAZ) index with a cutoff (z-score) of less than -2 SD. Stunting or short stature in toddlers can be identified when a toddler's height or length is measured, then compared to the standard, and the measurement results fall within the normal range (Ministry of Health of Indonesia).

President Jokowi's mandate in the implementation of Acceleration of Stunting Reduction aims to achieve the national target prevalence of stunting of 14% by 2024. In the *Peraturan Presiden Nomor 72 Tahun 2021* regarding the Acceleration of Reducing Stunting, one of the priority activities outlined in the National Action Plan for Accelerating Stunting Reduction (*RAN PASTI*) is the implementation of family assistance for stunting-risk families, assistance for all prospective brides/prospective reproductive-age couples (*PUS*), and surveillance of stunting-risk families. The role of *TPK* is crucial in supporting the process of assisting stunting-risk families in the field, along with the National Population and Family Planning Board (*BKKBN*) as a partner of relevant Ministries/Agencies that form 210,000 Support Cadre Teams including Village Midwives, Family Planning Cadres, and Family Welfare Empowerment Cadres.

The government, in its efforts to tackle and accelerate the reduction of stunting in Indonesia, has designated 1,000 priority intervention villages for stunting located in 100 districts/cities and 34 provinces. The determination of 100 priority districts/cities is based on indicators such as the number of stunted toddlers (Riskesdas 2013), stunting prevalence, and poverty levels (Susenas 2013), resulting in the selection of at least 1 district/city from each province, one of which is Sukabumi Regency.

Sukabumi Regency Government, in its efforts to accelerate stunting reduction based on regionalization, has formulated a policy outlined in the regulation number 14 of 2022 concerning the acceleration of stunting reduction at the village level in Sukabumi Regency. This policy aims to boost stunting reduction performance at the district and village levels through innovative

stunting reduction initiatives across the Regency and forming a stunting case audit team to optimize the role of the stunting task force established by Sukabumi Regency in accordance with the directives of *BKKBN*, West Java Province representative.

In Gunungguruh District, it is known that the prevalence of stunted toddlers (height-for-age) in the Gunungguruh District area was 4.3% in 2022 and 6.8% in 2023, indicating an increase in stunting cases in Gunungguruh District. *TPK* is a community empowerment movement where the community is directly involved in reducing the incidence of stunting. Each *TPK* officer will directly engage in the field and encounter various problems at the smallest community level, from villages to families.

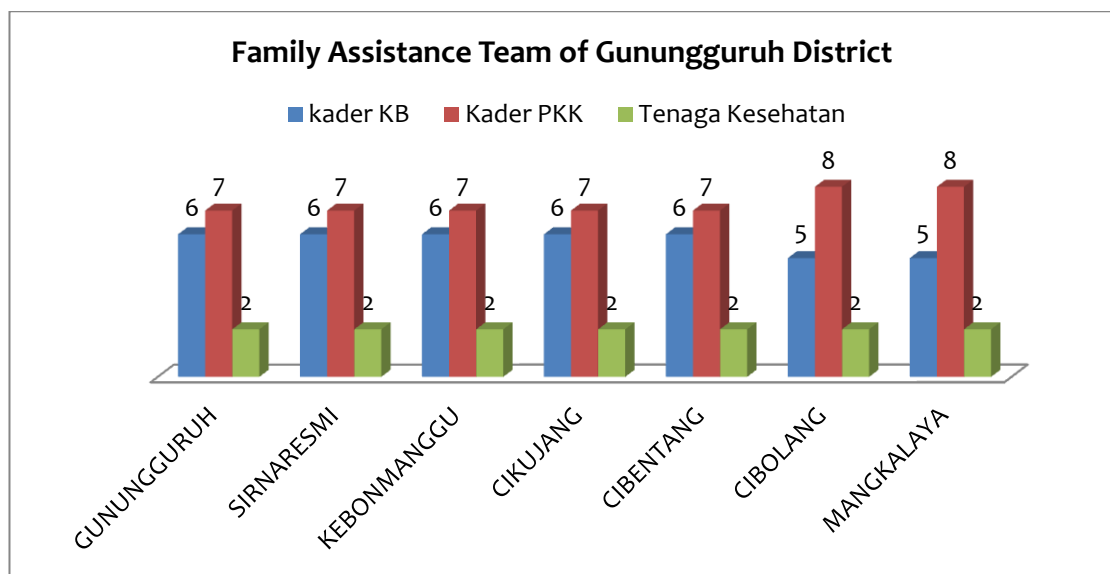


Figure 1. Members of the Family Assistance Team

Based on Graph Table 1.3, the number of members of the Family Assistance Team (*TPK*) in Gunungguruh District is 105 people, consisting of 40 family planning cadres, 51 Family Welfare Program cadres, and 14 healthcare personnel. There is a gap in each assistance team because ideally, there should be one healthcare personnel in each team, but in reality, the family assistance teams are dominated by Family Welfare Program cadres. This is concerning as it may affect the quality of assistance aimed at reducing stunting rates in Gunungguruh District.

Based on observations in Gunungguruh District, several issues have been identified regarding the implementation of the Family Assistance Team program. This can be seen from phenomena including:

1. Insufficient number of healthcare personnel in each team in every village, which affects the implementation of assistance itself;
2. Increasing cases of stunting in Gunungguruh District;
3. Suboptimal performance of the Family Assistance Team despite meeting budget aspects.

B. LITERATURE REVIEW

Effectiveness of Public Policy

According to Matland (in Nugroho, 2008:650), based on policy effectiveness theory, there are essentially "five points" that need to be fulfilled in terms of policy implementation effectiveness, namely:

1. Policy Appropriateness
2. Implementation Appropriateness
3. Target Appropriateness
4. Environmental Appropriateness
5. Process Appropriateness

Family Assistance Team

The National Family Planning Coordination Board (2021) defines Family Assistance as a series of activities that include counseling, referral service facilitation, and facilitation of social assistance provision aimed at improving access to information and services for families and/or families at risk of stunting such as pregnant women, postpartum mothers, children aged 0-59 months, and all prospective brides/prospective reproductive-age couples through pre-marital counselling for 3 (three) months as part of marriage services to early detect stunting risk factors and minimize or prevent the effects of stunting risk factors.

The significant role of family assistance for stunting-risk families in monitoring the acceleration of stunting reduction demands quality assistance resources. This guideline serves as the basis for family assistance implementation and the establishment of family assistance teams by the Stunting Reduction Acceleration Implementation Team at the provincial, district/city, sub-district, and village levels.

The objectives of the Family Assistance Team program are as follows:

- a. General Objective
To implement family assistance implementation policies in efforts to accelerate stunting reduction at the village level, serving as a reference for the Stunting Reduction Acceleration Team in preparing, organizing, implementing, monitoring, and evaluating family assistance implementation at the village level.
- b. Specific Objectives
 1. To encourage community participation in policy direction and family assistance implementation strategies by utilizing existing resources.
 2. To enhance the capacity and capability of district and village governments in facilitating sustainable Family Assistance Team implementation.
 3. To improve the quality of assistance and the effectiveness of family assistance team policy in reducing stunting.

Stunting

The Ministry of Health (2020) states that stunting is a condition where the body is short beyond a deficit of 2 Standard Deviations below the median length or height of the population, which serves as an international reference. Short height for age, or when a child's body is shorter than other children of the same age, is defined as stunting, characterized by delayed child growth resulting in

failure to achieve normal and healthy height for age. Stunting can be interpreted as chronic malnutrition or past growth failure and is used as a long-term indicator of malnutrition in children.

Several factors contribute to the occurrence of stunting in children. The causes can be direct or indirect. Direct causes of stunting include nutritional intake and the presence of infectious diseases, while indirect causes include childcare practices, healthcare services, food availability, cultural factors, economics, and many other factors (National Family Planning Coordination Board, 2021).

a. Direct Factors

- 1) Toddler nutritional intake: Adequate nutritional intake is essential for toddler growth and development. This critical period is when toddlers undergo rapid growth and catch-up growth. Toddlers with previous malnutrition can still be improved with good nutrition intake, allowing them to catch up with their growth delays. However, if the intervention is delayed, toddlers will not be able to catch up with their growth delays, resulting in failure to thrive. Even normal toddlers may experience growth disturbances if their intake is insufficient. Research analyzing the results of *Riskesdas* states that toddler energy consumption affects the incidence of short toddlers. Additionally, at the household level, below-average household energy consumption causes short toddlers.
- 2) Infectious diseases: Infectious diseases are one of the direct causes of stunting. The connection between infectious diseases and nutritional intake cannot be separated. The presence of infectious diseases will worsen the situation if there is a lack of nutritional intake. Malnourished toddlers are more susceptible to infectious diseases. Therefore, early treatment of infectious diseases will help improve nutrition by supplementing intake according to toddlers' needs. Common infectious diseases in toddlers such as worm infestations, Upper Respiratory Tract Infections (URTI), diarrheal, and other infections are closely related to the quality of basic healthcare services, especially immunization, environmental quality, and healthy behaviour.

Some studies examining the relationship between infectious diseases and stunting state that diarrheal is one of the risk factors for stunting in children under 5 years old.

b. Indirect Factors

- 1) Food availability: Insufficient food availability can result in inadequate nutrient intake within the family itself. The average calorie and protein intake of toddlers in Indonesia is still below the Nutritional Adequacy Rate (NAR), resulting in Indonesian girls and boys being on average 6.7 cm and 7.3 cm shorter, respectively, than the WHO reference standards. Therefore, addressing this nutritional problem involves not only the health sector but also other sectors. Food availability is a factor contributing to stunting incidence. Household food availability is influenced by family income, lower family income, and lower food expenditure being some characteristics of households with short children. Research in East

Semarang also states that low per capita income is a risk factor for stunting. Additionally, studies conducted in North Maluku and Nepal state that stunting is influenced by many factors, including socioeconomic factors such as food deficit in families.

- 2) Maternal nutritional status during pregnancy: Maternal nutritional status during pregnancy is influenced by many factors, which may occur before or during pregnancy. Several measurement indicators, such as 1) haemoglobin (Hb) levels indicating a haemoglobin level of 11 Hb in the blood to determine anaemia; 2) Mid-Upper Arm Circumference (MUAC), a measure of maternal nutritional adequacy to determine malnutrition; 3) results of weight measurements to determine weight gain during pregnancy compared to the mother's BMI before pregnancy.

C. METHOD

This study employs a qualitative method. Qualitative research method is used to examine the conditions of natural objects in which the researcher is the key instrument (Sugiyono, 2013). Through this qualitative approach, it is expected that each obtained data will provide a clear and natural depiction of the conditions and issues in the implementation of the Family Assistance Team (*TPK*) Program in Gunungguruhi District. In this descriptive research, the researcher utilizes a qualitative approach in the form of a case study, while for this research, the researcher determines informants using purposive sampling technique. According to Sugiyono (2013: 218-219), purposive sampling is a technique of sampling or selecting data sources based on specific considerations. With these specific considerations, the researcher assumes that the selected informants will possess the information and data needed by the researcher. The number of informants in this study is 12 individuals. Furthermore, data collection techniques in this research include interviews, literature review, and observation. Data validation in this study employs triangulation technique. Data analysis in the research is conducted using interactive data analysis techniques according to Miles & Huberman Sutopo (2002:94), consisting of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing.

D. EXPLANATION

How effective is the implementation of the Family Assistance Team Program Policy to Reduce Stunting Rates in Gunungguruh District, Sukabumi Regency?

To measure the effectiveness in this study, the researcher employs 5 (five) indicators proposed by Matland (in Nugroho, 2008:650). The results and discussion of this research are as follows:

1. Appropriate Policy

The Family Assistance Team program is an appropriate policy to be implemented as an effort to address the existing issues and is expected to provide a solution to the current problem of increasing stunting rates, particularly among the community in Gunungguruh District, Sukabumi Regency.

2. Proper Implementation

This policy is suitable for implementation because it stems from an existing issue in Gunungguruh District with a high stunting case rate. Therefore, the Family Assistance Team policy is appropriately implemented by institutions with the goal of carrying out programs to accelerate the reduction of stunting. The institutions involved in implementing the Family Assistance Team program are the Population and Family Planning Control Agency (*DPPKB*) of Sukabumi Regency, the Health Office of Sukabumi Regency, the Gunungguruh Sub-District Office, and the Village Office. The Family Assistance Team program is an appropriate policy to be implemented as an effort to address the existing issues and is expected to provide a solution to the current problem, particularly among the community in Gunungguruh District, Sukabumi Regency.

3. Proper Targeting

The policy regarding the Family Assistance Team program does not overlap with or contradict other programs. The Family Assistance Team program is intended as an effort to accelerate the reduction of stunting based on territoriality by optimizing the roles of *TPK* members in each sub-district, which also serves as part of the National Action Plan for Accelerating Stunting Reduction stipulated in Presidential Regulation no. 72 of 2021. However, the Family Assistance Team program has not been fully implemented correctly in targeting its policy objectives. Therefore, in its implementation, there is a need to refocus on the priorities outlined in the technical guidelines of the Family Assistance Team program. With the growing budget allocated, it should ideally leverage higher performance.

4. Proper Environment

In the implementation of the Family Assistance Team program, the policy environment concerning interactions between policy-making institutions is considered adequate. This means that the government institutions involved always strive to interact with other institutions to carry out assistance activities in Gunungguruh District. Additionally, as this policy involves empowerment efforts, the government institutions also pay attention to communication aspects with the community and support the community in implementing these activities.

5. Proper Process

In the process of implementing the Family Assistance Team program, there are issues in the evaluation phase where the results of the program implementation in the villages have not been discussed collectively, seemingly neglecting the obligation of the program. However, the evaluation phase is crucial as part of sustainable assistance efforts, and the benefits of the activities' results can truly be felt by the community.

Factors that are still obstacles in the implementation of the Family Assistance Team Program in Reducing Stunting Rates in Gunungguruh Sub-District

The Family Assistance Team program is one of the government's efforts to reduce stunting rates in Indonesia. This program involves a team consisting of midwives, Family Welfare Empowerment Movement (*TP PKK*) cadres, Family

Planning (*KB*) cadres, and stunting reduction acceleration team. This team is tasked with providing assistance to families at risk of stunting, prospective brides and grooms, and prospective couples of childbearing age.

One of the policies implemented by the Indonesian government is the family assistance team program. This program aims to assist families in planning, implementing, and monitoring policies related to family welfare. However, in its implementation, there are several hindering factors that can impede the success of the program. These factors need to be understood and wisely addressed to achieve optimal results.

In the implementation of the Family Assistance Team policy in Gunungguruh Sub-District, there are several factors that still pose obstacles in reducing stunting rates, including:

1. Limited Budget

The Family Assistance Team program requires sufficient financial resources to pay for the support team that will provide services to families. If the available funds are limited, the government must prioritize the wise use of the budget to ensure that the program continues to run smoothly, with priority given to families most in need, particularly families at risk of stunting.

2. Lack of Public Awareness

In addition to budget constraints, another hindering factor is the lack of awareness and community participation in this program. It is important for the government to conduct intensive and in-depth socialization to the community about the benefits and objectives of the family assistance team program. Limited family participation and involvement in this program can also be a significant barrier to its effectiveness. Some recipient families may have difficulty attending program meetings due to low education levels or other barriers. This can limit the program's impact, as families may not receive all the services and support available to them. Therefore, it is important to overcome these barriers and strive to increase family participation and involvement in the program.

3. Minimal Implementation of Training

Another obstacle that needs to be overcome is the lack of quality support. In carrying out their duties, the family support team needs to have sufficient abilities, knowledge, and skills. Therefore, regular training and good professional development for the family support team are needed. This will enable the support team to provide better services to families, thereby achieving the program's goals.

4. Suboptimal Coordination between Relevant Agencies

The Family Assistance Team program involves various Government and Non-Government Agencies with specific roles and responsibilities. There needs to be a wise coordination mechanism to create synergy and effective collaboration among all relevant parties. Good coordination will minimize program overlaps, avoid mutual claims, and ensure the program runs smoothly.

Researchers can interpret factors that may hinder the Family Assistance Team program policy needs to be managed wisely. Budget constraints, lack of public awareness and participation, lack of support team quality, and lack of

interagency coordination are some factors that need attention. By wisely addressing these obstacles, the Family Assistance Team program can achieve maximum results and provide tangible benefits to Indonesian families.

Efforts to Enhance the Effectiveness of the Family Assistance Team Program in Reducing Stunting Rates in Gunungguruh Sub-District

The Family Assistance Team Program is a crucial strategy in accelerating the reduction of stunting rates. Efforts can be made to enhance the effectiveness of the Family Assistance Team program policy in reducing stunting rates in Gunungguruh Sub-District, including:

1. Increasing Budget Allocation

Increasing the budget is one of the efforts that can be made for the Family Assistance Team program policy to reduce stunting rates. Stunting itself is a condition where a child's growth is hindered, leading to health disorders and suboptimal physical development. This is a serious concern for the government in improving the quality of human resources in Indonesia.

Increasing the budget for the implementation of the Family Assistance Team program in reducing stunting rates is a crucial step. With increased funding, the program's coverage can be expanded, supporting effective and efficient implementation. Increased budget allocation can be used for various purposes, such as improving healthcare service quality, increasing the number of healthcare workers involved in the program, enhancing the quantity and quality of medical equipment, and increasing public awareness and education about the importance of healthcare to prevent stunting.

With sufficient funding, the Family Assistance Team program can provide more optimal healthcare services to families. This will positively impact the reduction of stunting rates, as more families will receive good and appropriate healthcare services. Moreover, the increased budget can also be used to provide incentives to healthcare workers involved in the program to enhance motivation and service quality. Therefore, increasing the budget is a crucial and strategic step in the implementation of the Family Assistance Team program to reduce stunting rates.

2. Enhancing Public Awareness

One of the efforts to increase public awareness is through the Family Assistance Team program. This program aims to provide education about the importance of balanced nutrition for children and to provide assistance and support to families in meeting their children's nutritional needs. With the Family Assistance Team program, it is hoped that the community can be more aware of stunting issues and take concrete steps to prevent it. The community needs to be adequately informed about the importance of nutrition for children's growth and ways to prevent stunting. With better understanding, it is hoped that the community can be more proactive in maintaining the nutritional health of their children.

Moreover, conducting periodic surveys and evaluations of the Family Assistance Team program implementation is crucial. With accurate and up-to-date data, relevant parties can assess the effectiveness of this program in reducing stunting rates in Gunungguruh Sub-District and make improvements

and adjustments if necessary.

Increasing public awareness of the importance of balanced nutrition for children is a crucial initial step in reducing stunting rates. With an effective Family Assistance Team program and support from various stakeholders, it is hoped that stunting rates in Indonesia, especially in Gunungguruh Sub-District, can continue to decline, and children can grow and develop healthily and optimally.

3. Enhancing Knowledge and Training

The family support team, consisting of midwives, *TP PKK* cadres, and *KB* cadres, need to receive training and knowledge enhancement on stunting, nutrition, and child care. With good understanding, they can provide more effective support to families at risk of stunting. Improving the quality and quantity of program support by providing training and supervision to the support team, providing adequate facilities and equipment. Conducting regular monitoring and evaluation to measure the level of participation, satisfaction, and program impact on the community, and providing feedback and improvements if necessary.

The family support team should focus on families at high risk of stunting, where the criteria for families at risk of stunting can be seen in the verification and validation of the latest data so that early intervention can be carried out. By providing intensive support, including nutritional monitoring, child care, and education, they can help reduce stunting rates in the Gunungguruh sub-district.

4. Improving Coordination between Relevant Agencies

Improving coordination between relevant agencies in Gunungguruh Sub-District is a crucial step in implementing the Family Assistance Team program policy to reduce stunting rates. The Family Assistance Team program has been implemented as one of the government's efforts to address stunting issues. This program relies on cooperation between various relevant agencies, such as the Health Department, Population and Family Planning Control Agency, Department of Religion, and other institutions involved in stunting management in Gunungguruh Sub-District. However, to ensure the success of this program, good coordination between relevant agencies needs to be enhanced.

Coordination between relevant agencies will ensure that all parties have the same understanding of the objectives and strategies of the Family Assistance Team program. Each agency has its role in efforts to reduce stunting rates, and good coordination will ensure that the resources and expertise of each agency can be optimally utilized. With good coordination, the agencies involved can work together in planning, implementing, and monitoring the Family Assistance Team program. This will minimize overlapping activities and ensure efficient use of available resources.

Moreover, coordination between relevant agencies will also ensure accountability in the implementation of the Family Assistance Team program. With the mapping of roles and responsibilities of each agency, the success or failure of the program can be clearly known to all parties involved. This will

motivate relevant agencies to contribute their best efforts to reduce stunting rates in Gunungguruh Sub-District.

From the research results of Lawaceng and Rahayu (2020), it was found that organizational capabilities in planning, implementing and evaluating programs, managing village funds, socialization and communication, partnerships, coaching village governments and village communities, are the dominant factors in handling stunting in Pandeglang. The research results of Azizah and Agustina (2023) show that the role of the Sukodono Village government according to the yeti theory approach is that there are four indicators, namely the availability of facilities and infrastructure where the village government has made efforts to provide the *Posyandu* equipment. The second is the availability of a budget where the Sukodono Village government has budgeted IDR 60,000,000 for the stunting program. In these three collaborations there are three parties who play a role, namely the Village Government, Health Officers and the Regional General Hospital. Lastly is community participation where the people of Sukodono Village fully support reducing stunting rates

E. CONCLUSION

Implementation of the Family Assistance Team Program Policy to Reduce Stunting Rates in Gunungguruh Sub-District, Sukabumi Regency, has not been effective. The family support team program is one of the government's efforts to reduce stunting rates in Indonesia. This program involves a team consisting of midwives, *TP PKK* cadres, *KB* cadres, and stunting reduction acceleration teams. This team is tasked with providing assistance to families at risk of stunting, prospective newlyweds, and prospective couples of reproductive age. In the implementation of the Family Assistance Team policy in Gunungguruh Sub-District, there are several factors that still pose obstacles to reducing stunting rates, including:

1. Low community participation in the family support team program due to lack of socialization, motivation, and understanding of the benefits and objectives of the program is one of the challenges faced in implementing this program. The family support team program aims to reduce stunting rates in Indonesia by providing assistance to families at risk of stunting, prospective newlyweds, and prospective couples of reproductive age. Lack of socialization, motivation, and understanding of the family support team program may cause the community to be uninterested, distrustful, or indifferent to the program. They may not realize the importance of this program for their future health, leading to an increasing stunting rate in Gunungguruh Sub-District every year.
2. Technical constraints in assistance, such as lack of human resources, facilities, infrastructure, and team coordination. Insufficient healthcare personnel in each team can be a major obstacle in providing quality and adequate assistance services to families at risk of stunting.

The Family Assistance Team Program is a crucial strategy in accelerating the reduction of stunting rates, so efforts can be made to make the implementation of the Family Assistance Team program policy in reducing stunting rates in Gunungguruh Sub-District more effective, including: Increasing the budget to

optimize the implementation of the Family Assistance Team program in reducing stunting rates is a crucial step; Increasing community awareness of the importance of balanced nutrition for children is a crucial initial step in reducing stunting rates; Socialization and education need to be increased in frequency; With good understanding, they can provide more effective assistance to families at risk of stunting. Improving the quality and quantity of program assistance by providing training and supervision to the support team, providing adequate facilities and equipment. Conducting periodic monitoring and evaluation to measure the level of participation, satisfaction, and impact of the program on the community, and providing feedback and improvements if necessary; Coordination between relevant agencies will ensure that all parties have the same understanding of the objectives and strategies of the Family Assistance Team program. Each agency has its role in efforts to reduce stunting rates, and good coordination will ensure that the resources and expertise of each agency can be optimally utilized. With good coordination, the agencies involved can work together in planning, implementing, and monitoring the Family Assistance Team program. This will minimize overlapping activities and ensure efficient use of available resources.

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