

## EFFECTIVENESS OF THE STUNTING REDUCTION ACCELERATION PROGRAM IN GUNUNGSITOLI CITY

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### ABSTRACT

Stunting of toddlers is a major nutritional problem in Indonesia. In Gunungsitoli City, the prevalence of stunting in 2021 was recorded at 26.3%. This study aims to determine the effectiveness of the stunting reduction acceleration program in Gunungsitoli City, using Budiani (2009) theoretical indicators consisting of the dimensions of program target accuracy, program socialization, program goal achievement, and program monitoring. This study uses a qualitative approach; data is collected through interviews with key and supporting informants and qualitative data analysis. The results of the study show that the obstacles in the effectiveness of the stunting reduction acceleration program in Gunungsitoli City are based on indicators of the accuracy of program goals, program socialization, achievement of program goals, and program monitoring and can be concluded that it has been implemented effectively, where the reduction of stunting rates in Gunungsitoli City as one of the goals of the integrated stunting reduction acceleration program. Communication between agencies must be further improved so that the effectiveness of the stunting program is as expected.

**Keywords:** *Effectiveness, Program, and Acceleration of Stunting Reduction*

### A. INTRODUCTION

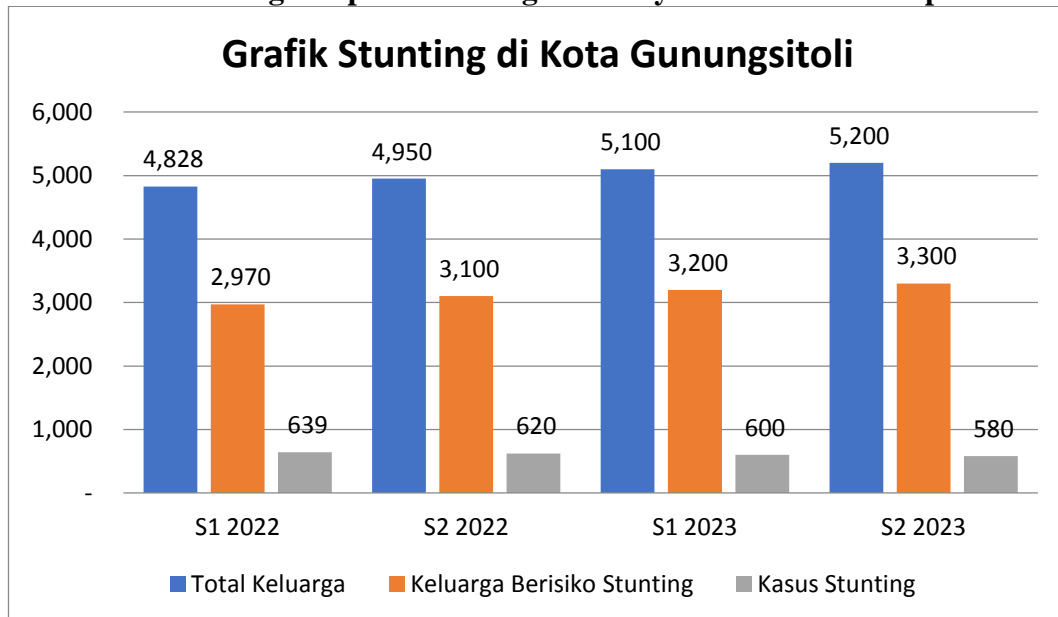
Basically, the main cause of malnutrition is an economic problem characterized by low purchasing power of the community, which causes low food availability at the household level, resulting in low nutrient intake, poor parenting patterns for toddlers, poor environmental sanitation conditions, lack of clean water sources, and lack of access to welfare services also contribute. Because the causes of malnutrition are multifactorial, efforts are needed to address this problem using a multisectoral approach. This shows that malnutrition is not only carried out by health institutions but also requires collaboration with other institutions outside health institutions. Economics, public works, agriculture, food security, fisheries, education, and other related fields are areas outside health that are very important in addressing nutritional problems (Hardinsyah & Supariasa, 2016).

According to the classical theory of H. L. Bloom (1974) the four main factors that affect a person's health degree are lifestyle, environment (social, economic, political, and cultural), health services and genetic factors. These factors interact with each other and affect the health status of the individual. In terms of the growth and development of children, environmental factors have the greatest influence. Growth refers to an increase in the size and number of cells and tissues that results in an increase in the physical size and structure of the body in whole or in part, is quantitative and can be measured in units of weight or length. Development on the other hand is an increase in the ability of more complex structures and functions of the body. Growth and development occur simultaneously. Sigmund Freud divided the stages of child growth and development into five phases, namely the oral, anal, pharynx, latent and genital phases (Salsabila et al., 2021).

Stunting is a condition in which a child's height is shorter than the height of a child of his age. Stunting or short is a form of malnutrition characterized by a Z-score of height by age (TB/U) of less than 2 standard deviations (SD) based on the World Health Organization (2014). According to the 2021 Indonesia Nutrition Status Survey (*SSGI*), the prevalence of stunting was recorded at 18.6 percent, down from 19.93 percent in the 2019 Indonesia Toddler Nutrition Status Survey (*SSGBI*). Data from the Electronic Community-Based Nutrition Reporting Recording (*ePPGBM*) shows that the stunting percentage in 2021 was 4.16 percent, which is lower compared to 4.62 percent in 2020 and 9.4 percent in 2019 (Suhartina & Novita, 2023).

In 2021, the prevalence of stunting in Gunungsitoli City was recorded at 26.3% based on the results of the Indonesia Nutrition Status Survey. To overcome this problem, Gunungsitoli City implements a stunting reduction acceleration program that uses a multi-sector approach, involving collaboration between various institutions such as the economy, public works, agriculture, food security, fisheries, education, and health institutions. This program is implemented through 8 Convergence Actions which include situation analysis, activity planning, stunting prevention, development of actors and village/sub-district governments, stunting data management system, stunting measurement and publication, and annual performance reviews.

In Semester 1 of 2022, there were 4828 families in Gunungsitoli City, of which 2970 families were at risk of stunting and 639 stunting cases were recorded. The program implemented succeeded in reducing the number of stunting cases to 620 in Semester 2 of 2022 with the number of families at risk increasing to 3100 out of a total of 4950 families. In Semester 1 of 2023, the number of stunting cases dropped again to 600 from 3200 families at risk among 5100 families. Until Semester 2 of 2023, the number of stunting cases decreased again to 580 from 3300 families at risk among 5200 families. See below:

**Table 1. Stunting Graph in Gunungsitoli City for the 2022-2023 periods**

Source: *Researcher 2024*

This program is supported by regulations such as the *Peraturan Walikota Gunungsitoli Nomor 52 Tahun 2022* concerning the acceleration of stunting reduction and the *Keputusan Walikota Gunungsitoli Nomor 476-39 Tahun 2023* concerning the formation of a stunting reduction acceleration team. Service coverage indicators show an increase such as adolescent girls who consume Blood Supplement Tablets (*TTD*) with the realization of 84% of the target of 58% and children aged 6-23 months who receive Complementary Foods for Breast Milk (*MP-ASI*) reaching 100% of the target of 80%.

Although the stunting reduction acceleration program has been implemented in Gunungsitoli City, the reduction in stunting rates is still relatively low and insignificant. In Semester 1 of 2022 there were 639 cases of stunting which only decreased to 580 cases in Semester 2 of 2023. Limited data from the research The effectiveness of this stunting reduction acceleration program has not been enough or has not been processed in depth so that it opens up opportunities for researchers to conduct this research, theories that explain stunting reduction may already exist, but have not been tested in a special context such as in Gunungsitoli so that this creates a theoretical gap where existing theories need to be confirmed or adjusted to the local situation. Empirical and theoretical gaps provide a foundation for identifying specific problems to be answered in research. Another important thing is that the research has a clear and relevant focus. Research that fills this gap can also make an important contribution to public policy development, especially related to efforts to reduce stunting in Gunungsitoli.

Therefore, this study was conducted to see how effective the program has been running, identify the obstacles faced, and provide strategic recommendations to accelerate the reduction of stunting rates in Gunungsitoli City more significantly.

## B. LITERATURE REVIEW

The word Effective that is often used in Indonesia is a word that comes from the United Kingdom, Effective. Which means having the meaning of success, succeeding well. Effective is basically a basic word where the adjective of effective is effectiveness, where the purpose of administration and management is to obtain results effectively and efficiently.

According to Peki (2016), it is stated that Effectiveness is the relationship between output and objectives or it can also be said to be a measure of how far the level of output, policies and procedures of the organization is. According to Sedarmayanti (2006), effectiveness is a measure that gives an overview of the extent to which the target can be achieved. Where with the achievement of goals and objectives will show the level of effectiveness. According to Mardiasmo (2017), effectiveness is a measure of whether or not an organization achieves its goals. If an organization achieves its goals, the organization has run effectively. Furthermore, Effectiveness according to Nugroho in Astuti et al. (2022) effectiveness is a term in operations management / operations research, meaning the ability to achieve targets or goals.

From some of the expert opinions above, the conclusion of effectiveness is as one of the measures or benchmarks to determine the achievement in the form of goals and objectives of an activity based on a plan that has been made previously. So that later the effectiveness will correlate with output and outcome. Activities or programs can be said to be effective if the outputs or outputs produced can meet the goals that have been determined at the beginning.

Developing a program has great benefits in determining the future and sustainability of an organization, be it a state or a government organization. A well-designed program is not only useful in particular but also in general, which means it can be enjoyed by all walks of life. The benefits of program preparation can be seen after the implementation of the program and the results achieved, because regular programs allow the achievement of results that meet or even exceed expectations. This program will also be a reference data for organizations to carry out activities and become the goals to be achieved, as well as the target of an activity. Therefore, programs are very important in an organization. In the preparation of the program, all planned activities can be explained in detail so that their implementation has a small possibility of going out of the reach of the program. This is very useful for determining the budget, the necessary tools, as well as the time and place of the planned implementation of the program.

In determining what will be needed, of course, the use of resources is needed, which was stated by Moekijat (2004), namely "A program is a broad plan that contains the use of different resources for the future in a unified pattern and determines a description of the activities and time plans needed by each source, in order to achieve the goals that have been set". Moekijat argued that the program is a broad plan and needs to involve resources as a way to determine or determine the sequence of activities in stages to achieve the goals desired by all parties.

The indicators of program effectiveness according to Budiani (2007) are as follows:

1. The accuracy of the program goals, namely the extent to which the program participants are right with the predetermined targets.
2. Program socialization, which is the ability of program implementation to socialize the program so that information about program implementation can be conveyed to the community.
3. The purpose of the program, namely the ability of the respondents to know the purpose of the program. This proves that the socialization carried out regarding the purpose of a program can be understood by the community.
4. Program monitoring, which is activities carried out during or after the implementation of the program as a form of attention to program participants.

According to Budiani (2007), it is said that program effectiveness where there is program compatibility between output and goals that have been set. Where in looking at the level of program effectiveness, it gives an overview of the ability and consistency of the local government in an effort to realize the planned programs are seen and compared with the set targets. The researcher will use indicators made by Budiani where these indicators are relevant and in accordance with the problems in the field.

### **C. METHOD**

This research is a qualitative research that according to Sugiyono (2010) is a research method used to research the condition of natural objects with the researcher as a key instrument. Data analysis is inductive/qualitative with research results that emphasize meaning rather than generalization, and data collection is carried out in a triangulation or combined manner. This type of research uses a case study approach, which is research that focuses on a specific case to be observed and analyzed carefully until it is complete. Case study research or field research is intended to intensively study the background of the problem, circumstances, and position of an event that is currently taking place. The subject of the research can be an individual, group, agency, or community. Case study research is an in-depth study of a certain social unit that provides a broad and in-depth description of the social unit. The subjects studied are relatively limited, but the variables and focus studied are very broad.

This research was conducted by researchers from May to June 2024. The location of the research was carried out in Gunungsitoli City. Data collection is the most strategic step in research because the main purpose of research is to obtain data. The data was obtained through literature studies, observations, interviews, and documentation. The data analysis technique used is qualitative data analysis where activities in qualitative data analysis are carried out interactively and continuously until it is complete. When the data is saturated, data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing are carried out (Sugiyono, 2010). The validity test of data includes trust or credibility, dependability, and confirmability which are checked through source triangulation, technique triangulation, and time triangulation (Sugiyono, 2010).

#### **D. EXPLANATION**

In this chapter, the researcher will explain the results of research and research that has been carried out previously, namely regarding the effectiveness of the stunting reduction acceleration program in Gunungsitoli City. The object of this research was carried out by the Gunungsitoli City Government and the Stunting Reduction Acceleration Team (*TPPS*) located in Gunungsitoli City, North Sumatra Province. The Stunting Reduction Acceleration Team (*TPPS*) is one of the teams formed by the Gunungsitoli City government which is responsible for accelerating stunting reduction in Gunungsitoli City. This team is led directly by the Mayor of Gunungsitoli as Chairman and several agencies and agencies such as the Health Office, the Regional Development Planning, Research and Development Agency (*BAPPELITBANG*), the Population Control, Women's Empowerment, and Child Protection (*P5A*) Office, the Food Security and Agriculture Service, the Public Housing and Spatial Planning Service (*PUTR*), the Marine Service, and the Social Service.

This study will look at the effectiveness of the stunting reduction acceleration program, the researcher will explain the findings in the field and will conduct research on several parties who are informants, especially those involved in the stunting handling acceleration team in Gunungsitoli City based on the theory to be used, so the author uses Budiani's (2007) theory about effectiveness and uses 4 indicators in seeing the effectiveness of the stunting reduction acceleration program in the city Gunungsitoli. Effectiveness Indicators according to Budiani (2007) are as follows:

1. Accuracy of Program Goals
2. Program Socialization
3. Achievement of program objectives
4. Program Monitoring

##### **Accuracy Of Program Goals**

The accuracy of program targets is one of the measures in a program in achieving targets or objectives that have been set where there is a sensitive and specific accuracy of nutrition intervention targets in accelerating stunting reduction for all communities and families at risk of stunting in the Gunungsitoli City environment.

Interviews with informants where there is information that the programs targeted by sensitive and specific nutrition interventions are based on the *Peraturan Presiden Nomor 72 Tahun 2021* concerning the acceleration of stunting reduction, followed by the *Peraturan Walikota Gunungsitoli Nomor 52 Tahun 2022* concerning the acceleration of stunting handling where the regulation makes the community and families the target in specific and sensitive interventions, in the study Black et al. (2013) shows that Specific nutrition interventions are effective in reducing stunting if carried out with a wide and consistent scope.

The Gunungsitoli City Government Program implemented by several regional apparatus organizations (*OPD*) is as follows:

1. Provision of access to proper sanitation for the community by the *PUTR* Office
2. Submission of Elsimil Certificate by the Health Office

3. Integrated social data collection program by the Social Service
4. Services of Obstetricians and Paediatricians at the *Puskesmas* by the Health Office
5. Sustainable Food Yard Activities by the Food Security and Agriculture Service
6. Family Planning Services One Million Acceptors and Family Planning *MOW* by the Health Office
7. Stunting Child Foster Father Program (*BAAS*) by several Agencies
8. Socialization of Healthy Kitchens to Overcome Stunting (*DASHAT*) in Family Planning Villages by the *P5A* office
9. Promotion of fish eating by the Fisheries Service.

Some of the programs implemented by the regional apparatus organization (*OPD*) above will then be allocated a budget to the activity program that will run based on the Regional Budget Support Data which will be adjusted to the budget and funding capabilities of the City of Gunungsitoli.

The target of these stunting alleviation programs starts from pregnant women, breastfeeding mothers, and children aged 0 to 59 months. Other important targets include young women, brides-to-be. The program was launched and implemented well where in its implementation it involved various regional apparatus organizations by synergizing to achieve a stunting-free rate and create a healthy and free nation generation from stunting.

#### **Program Socialization**

Program Socialization is a form of information transfer where the form of information delivery is related to intervention programs, both specific and sensitive, where the delivery of this information is conveyed to the community and families at risk of stunting in Gunungsitoli City. In the process of delivering information related to stunting intervention to the wider community, it needs to be carried out gradually and informatively and easily understood by the community, where the process of delivering this information is carried out by resources in the organization to achieve the goals implemented which are manifested in the form of stunting intervention policies and programs. Communication is the key to program socialization where there is good communication between related agencies; communication that is carried out in a structured manner with good patterns of approach to related agencies and conveyed to the community will have a great impact on the people of Gunungsitoli City.

In the implementation of program socialization, there is a program purpose where the program objective is to see the extent of the respondent's ability to know the purpose of the program implementer. Furthermore, the Health Office as one of the regional apparatus that conducts socialization about stunting by carrying out activities such as publications on stunting, the existence of stunting crackdowns, the implementation of socialization at the sub-district, sub-district, and village levels, at the school level, health centres and the *Posyandu*, as well as the implementation of cross-sector meetings. The Communication and Informatics Office, which is also one of the agencies in the stunting reduction acceleration team, is intensively socializing stunting both in print and online media. The Social Service conducts an intervention program in the form of socialization through coordination at the sub-district, sub-district, and village levels in capturing

community members or underprivileged families to be recorded and included in the *DTKS* (Integrated Social Welfare Data) application system which allows verification for people who manage Certificates of Incapacity (*SKTM*).



**Figure 1. Activity ‘*Rembuk Stunting*’ at the Gunungsitoli city level**  
(Source: *Researcher*, 2024)

Rembuk stunting is one of the actions or efforts in the stunting-free campaign in Gunungsitoli City, stunting is a forum or activity where the community, figures, and the government carry out deliberations and set goals and programs which start with stunting at the village, sub-district, and city levels. Research by Bhutta et al. (2013) shows that effective awareness campaigns can increase public understanding of the importance of nutrition but need to be supported by real policies and actions for better outcomes. It is hoped that the stunting crackdown that is carried out from the village level to the city level can be a means of campaigning to increase public awareness of the importance of nutrition and intake in children.

In the implementation of socialization, it is one of the efforts of the government in this context to the Stunting Reduction Acceleration Team (*TPPS*) where the team's efforts are to carry out socialization and education to the community so that the stunting rate can be significantly reduced. In this case, a communication system is needed based on socialization to the Gunungsitoli City Community, both directly and indirectly, the communication approach in the socialization of the stunting program is carried out to the Gunungsitoli City Community which is the target and object in the implementation of stunting interventions, both specific and sensitive.

#### **Achievement of Program Objectives**

The achievement of program objectives is the result obtained from the implementation of a program or activity, namely a stunting intervention program in the form of sensitive and specific interventions with the aim of reducing stunting rates in Gunungsitoli City. In achieving the goals of the program that has been planned, according to the informant from the results of the interview, it was explained that in the development of the implementation of the program by one of the agencies, namely the Public Works and Spatial Planning Office, in the context of increasing access to sanitation for community members, especially for pre-prosperous communities, is still being carried out gradually, where the provision of proper sanitation is one of the target indicators in the program to accelerate



stunting reduction. In addition, Humphrey (2009) emphasized that access to clean water and good sanitation contributes greatly to reducing the prevalence of stunting by reducing exposure to infections that can hinder children's growth. In 2022, the realization of sanitation access is still 41.2% of the 90% target, which means that sanitation for the community and households in the city of Gunungsitoli has not been achieved.

The social service as one of the implementers of the stunting intervention program carries out an integrated social protection program that aims to reduce, minimize, and supervise the identification of at-risk communities and families, as providers and facilitators in the distribution of social assistance, and take part in strengthening family planning in collaboration with the population control, women's empowerment, and child protection (*P5A*) and *BKKBN* or Agency national population and family planning.

The Fish Eating Program (*GEMARI*) initiated by the Gunungsitoli City Fisheries Office is one of the programs initiated to foster the spirit of consuming fish as a source of animal protein that is rich in vitamin omega 3, vitamin D and calcium, as well as vitamin B12 which is good for bones. This program aims to increase fish consumption where in 2023 the level of fish consumption in Gunungsitoli City will reach 71.5% of the national target where fishery production in Gunungsitoli City in 2023 is 7,163 tons consisting of 7,068 tons of capture fisheries and 95.24 tons of aquaculture per year, it is hoped that the number of fish consumption in the community will increase so that the generation produced is free from stunting because of the fulfilment of nutrients from animal protein in the form of fish has been achieved.

After the presentation of some of the information above, it can be seen that efforts to achieve the technical goals of the intervention program by the *PUTR* Office, the Social Service, and the Fisheries Service, all of which still need support and increased achievements.

The stunting reduction acceleration program in Gunungsitoli City still shows limited effectiveness despite various efforts that have been made. One of the main problems is the limitation of human resources, where is the availability of supporting health workers Research by Fadare et al. (2019) shows that trained health workers play a key role in reducing the prevalence of stunting through effective nutrition interventions and counselling to the community.

The implementation of the stunting reduction acceleration program accompanied by nutritional interventions which ultimately aim to reduce the prevalence of stunting so that nutritional problems can be handled properly, sometimes the distribution of nutritional supplements that are part of nutritional interventions experience challenges in the distribution and accuracy of the consumption of nutritional supplements. Haile et al. (2016) emphasized the importance of proper distribution and monitoring of nutritional supplement consumption to improve the nutritional status of children at risk of stunting.

The Gunungsitoli City Government through the *Peraturan Walikota Gunungsitoli Nomor 52 Tahun 2022* concerning the acceleration of stunting reduction and the *Keputusan Walikota Gunungsitoli Nomor 476 – 39 Tahun 2023* concerning the formation of a team to accelerate stunting reduction in

Gunungsitoli City for the 2022 Fiscal Year where there is integration regarding the acceleration of stunting reduction as well as the goals and programs that have been prepared and the existence of management in the team which is also part of the regional apparatus organization in an effort to integrate across sectors.

The purpose of the intervention program in general where there is an acceleration of stunting reduction in Gunungsitoli City which has gradually shown a decrease although not too significant in each semester where in 2022 semester 1 there were 639 cases then in semester 2 it decreased to 620 cases, then in semester 1 of 2023 there were 600 cases then in semester 2 of 2023 it decreased to 580 cases so that the implementation of sensitive nutrition interventions is still priority to achieve effective words in accelerating stunting reduction in Gunungsitoli City.

Overall, although there is a decrease in stunting prevalence from 26.3% in 2021 to 18.9 in 2023, this decrease is still not significant. WHO (2020) emphasized that reducing the prevalence of stunting requires stronger interventions and better coordination between sectors. To achieve more significant results, intensive and coordinated efforts are needed to increase the capacity of health workers, maintain medical equipment, distribute appropriate nutritional supplements, and increase public awareness and education.

#### **Program Monitoring**

Program Monitoring is an activity or activity that is carried out after the program is implemented to find out the extent to which the stunting handling acceleration program is running in accordance with the program or policy that has been implemented. The dimension of performance monitoring includes an assessment of the suitability of activities, outputs, and targets of the strategy to accelerate stunting reduction in Gunungsitoli City.

The Gunungsitoli City *TPPS* team routinely monitors programs or activities that are ongoing or have been planned as material in conducting evaluations, the Mayor as the chairman and Bappelitbang, along with other agencies are expected not only to hold meetings and monitoring in the evaluation of reports but also to review and go directly to the field to see and ensure whether the reports submitted are correct or not. Cross-sector coordination between related agencies is expected to foster synergy and collaboration so that there are ideas and ideas in an effort to reduce the prevalence rate in Gunungsitoli City.

Based on interviews with informants, there is a tendency for regional agencies or apparatus organizations to still build intersectoral relationships in official or formal meetings where informal matters related to coordination between agencies and regional apparatus are still not carried out properly. Based on interviews with informants outside the health office and the *P5A* office, it was found that related agencies or other regional apparatus organizations only carry out routine supervision and there are no breakthroughs or utilization of planned programs because they consider that the responsibility for accelerating stunting reduction only lies with the health office that carries out nutrition and health interventions and the *P5A* office that carries out health promotion.

In general, the monitoring process of the stunting reduction acceleration program, both specific and sensitive nutrition interventions in Gunungsitoli City, is going well, where the monitoring of programs in each related agency and cross-

sector monitoring related to the integration of nutrition interventions in each regional apparatus. This monitoring activity or process will be reported by the *TPPS* team at the Gunungsitoli City level and then the reporting will be available in 2 semesters in the current year. What is noted in the process or effort to monitor the stunting reduction acceleration program is coordination between cross-sectors that needs to be improved again so that information and synergy between related agencies can be carried out properly.

## **E. CONCLUSION**

1. Based on the indicators of target accuracy, program socialization, achievement of program objectives and program monitoring in the effectiveness of the stunting reduction acceleration program in Gunungsitoli City, it is concluded that it has run effectively. Where with the decrease in stunting rates in the current years, the program objectives are in the form of nutritional interventions that have been launched and become the focus and purpose of this research. The achievements of the implementing organization in terms of sensitive nutrition interventions in question include access to sanitation for the community, strengthening social assistance, fish feeding movements, and the availability of adequate medical personnel, some of which must be improved in the implementation process.
2. In this study, there is a novelty side with the previous research reviewed from the aspect of a specific local context where the focus is on the evaluation of the program implemented in Gunungsitoli, offering a deeper and contextual perspective compared to more general research. Judging from the context of policy relevance and implementation, the results of this study have direct implications for local policies, which can be used for further improvement and program development in Gunungsitoli, in contrast to other studies that may be more theoretical or general.
3. The implications of the findings in this study include in Humphrey's (2009) research emphasizing the importance of sanitation and hygiene, especially in preventing tropical malnutrition that contributes to child malnutrition. The findings of the study in Gunungsitoli show that the movement in improving access to sanitation facilities, such as toilets and clean water, plays an important role in reducing stunting. This reinforces Humphrey's argument that sanitation improvement is a crucial component in efforts to reduce child malnutrition. Research in Gunungsitoli also proposes that sanitation programs should be an integral part of child health policies in other tropical areas. Furthermore, in the study, Bhutta et al. (2013) emphasized the importance of evidence-based nutritional interventions in improving maternal and child health. Research in Gunungsitoli corroborates these findings by showing that intervention programs adapted to the local context have succeeded in reducing stunting rates. The implications of the findings of the study in Gunungsitoli show that although the factor of nutrient distribution is very important as stated by Haile et al. (2016), the success of stunting reduction is also highly dependent on how government policies and intervention programs are implemented effectively at the local level.

4. Another thing is related to synergy and communication both formally and informally with government agencies or organizations which are expected to be more solid and compact in accelerating the reduction of stunting, this is so that the implementation of the nutrition intervention program sensitively is on target for the people of Gunungsitoli City in general so that a stunting-free atmosphere or situation is created within the scope of Gunungsitoli City.

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