

Research Article

The Role of Multistakeholders in Handling Stunting in Brebes District

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Abstract.

Addressing stunting is agenda key priority in Brebes Regency. However, current efforts are largely dominated by government initiatives, with limited empowerment and involvement of other stakeholders. This study aims to analyze the roles of various actors and the obstacles they face in tackling stunting in Brebes Regency. Ratner's Collaborative Governance Theory is used to identify challenges and opportunities for enhancing multi-actor collaboration. A descriptive qualitative approach was used, with data collected through observation and in-depth interviews. The findings reveal that effective stunting intervention in Brebes Regency requires broader actor participation, particularly from organizations that can serve as facilitators. Non-governmental organizations (NGOs), in particular, have the potential to contribute significantly due to their diverse human resources and extensive networks. This research recommends greater NGO involvement as part of a community-based social movement, enabling them to act as a bridge between the community and the government in addressing stunting in Brebes Regency.

Keywords: stunting, collaborative governance, Brebes, multistakeholders, NGO, public administration

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1. INTRODUCTION

Stunting is a health problem that is currently occurring throughout the world. The World Health Organization (WHO) is the world's largest health organization provides a tolerance limit for stunting prevalence of no more than 20% or one-fifth of the number of children under five in each country. According to WHO, the prevalence of stunting in children under five becomes a public health problem if the prevalence is above 20% (1). Meanwhile, the prevalence of stunting in Indonesia is currently quite high, exceeding the tolerance limit set by WHO.

The 2024 Indonesian Nutritional Status Study (SSGI) shows that the prevalence of stunting in Indonesia is still quite high, namely 21.6%. This is still far from the target of reducing stunting in Indonesia by 14%. Stunting reduction is being accelerated in

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every region of Indonesia to maximize treatment at the grassroots level. Accelerating the reduction of the stunting problem is the government's effort to increase human resources who are healthy, intelligent, productive, and can achieve the Sustainability Development Goals (SDGs)(2).

Brebes Regency is one of the regencies that is still a location for stunting management interventions in Central Java province. In the last 3 (three) years from 2020 to 2022, the prevalence of Brebes was ranked in the top 5 in Central Java province. In 2023, even though the number of stunting has decreased quite significantly compared to the previous year, the prevalence in Brebes Regency still has not reached the Central Java average target of 14%. Currently, the Brebes Regency is in the high category in Central Java Province, namely 21.6% (3).

The Brebes Regency Government is carrying out stunting prevention program efforts, namely by carrying out convergence actions formed in the stunting discussion by the 2022 Brebes Regency Regulation, in addition to taking a multi-sector approach, not just the health sector. Efforts for the Accelerated Stunting Reduction Program are carried out by the Regional Government of Brebes Regency which is structured by existing policies, namely the 2022 Brebes Regent Regulation. Apart from the non-government sector, there are sectors involved in dealing with stunting in Brebes Regency, which consist of 1) the government sector; 2) the private sector; and 3) the community sector.

The involvement of the community or Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) in handling stunting is important because NGOs have sufficient human resources. This is one of the first steps in preparing planning and assistance in the field via a bottom-top route.

Brebes Regency won the award as 1st Place in the Best Region in Indonesia Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCNE) Award (4). This award is an award given by the Southeast Asian Ministers and Education Organization-Regional Center for Food and Nutrition for regional success in reducing stunting, through the implementation of the My Healthy and Smart Child Program in Indonesia. This success cannot be separated from the cross-sector collaboration carried out by the Brebes Regency Government over the last 3 (three) years.

With this success, it becomes interesting to study qualitative research using a multi-sector role approach involved in handling stunting in the Brebes Regency, especially the role of Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs). The aim of this research is to

determine the extent of the role of NGOs involved in handling stunting in the Brebes Regency.

2. THEORETICAL STUDY

According to Vigoda (5), the collaborative governance process can be implemented through several stages, one of which is by holding a multi-sector collaboration (launching implementation). The aim of this collaboration is so that problems can be resolved by knowing what is being done, who the actors are involved, and the indicators that are being targeted so that activity program efforts towards addressing reducing stunting rates can be achieved well.

A Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) is an institution that exists independently without any interference from the government by looking at movements in the social environment (6). Having NGOs as one of the actors in handling stunting is important because NGOs tend to be able to touch and understand the needs of the community.

Ratner (7) the collaboration process has 3 (three) stages which constitute the collaboration process, which include:

1. *Identifying Obstacles and Opportunities*

The first phase is the listening phase. At this stage, stakeholders carrying out collaboration identify various types of obstacles that will be faced during the collaborative process. Stakeholders explain problems to each other and others listen to each problem raised. Then, each stakeholder provides solutions to every problem that occurs. Stakeholders have the same opportunity to determine policies for each existing problem.

2. *Debating Strategies for Influence (Debating Strategies for Influence)*

The dialogue phase is a phase that involves stakeholders to discuss the obstacles explained in the first phase. The discussion carried out is related to the steps chosen effectively to solve the problem. Then the relevant stakeholders support solving the problems in the collaboration described.

3. *Planning Collaborative Actions (Planning Collaborative Actions)*

After going through the listening and doing stage to anticipate problems. At this stage, the stakeholders involved plan the implementation of the strategies that

have been discussed. Then, identify the measurements for each process carried out and determine steps to maintain the collaboration process.



Figure 1: Three stages of collaborative governance assessment and action planning.

3. METHODS

This research uses qualitative descriptive research to analyze the role of multisectors, especially NGOs, in handling stunting in the Brebes Regency. The informants for this research were Baperlitbangda Brebes Regency, DP3KB Service, and Health Service.

Data collection techniques are participant observation, in-depth interviews, documentation, and literature study (8).

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Related discussion: Analysis of the stages of the collaborative governance process in handling stunting in Brebes Regency, based on the concept of collaborative governance as proposed by Ratner (9), there are three stages whose aim is to look at the criteria for each stage, including:

4.1. First Stage: Identify Obstacles and Opportunities

This stage is called the listening phase, the aim of which is to identify the actors involved in handling stunting in the Brebes Regency. From data obtained by researchers in the field, the Brebes Regency Baperlitbangda team created a list of mapping stakeholders in handling stunting.

Presidential Instruction Number 1 of 2017, by inviting interest groups within Ministries/State Institutions and Provincial and Regency/City Level Governments to collaborate with the community in preparing activity programs in the context of improving healthy living behavior; accelerating improvements in nutrition and education on healthy living and improving environmental quality. The collaboration process in Brebes Regency for handling stunting is carried out jointly by several actors, namely from the Government, the Private Sector, and the Community.

The district-level stunting discussion in the Brebes Regency Baperlitbangda hall was attended by several sectors involved in handling stunting in the Brebes Regency. The following are the stakeholders who attended the stunting discussion age.

The data in the table shows that there are multisector roles involved in handling stunting in the Brebes Regency. However, his involvement was dominant. The government as a policy maker and decision maker still does not fully involve the role of other sectors such as NGOs. There is quite a lot of NGO involvement in the data, but there needs to be an involved role in deliberations and discussions. After conducting interviews and checking the validity of the data from the Brebes Regency Baperlitbangda report, the involvement of actors in discussions and deliberations was good. However, there is still a lack of non-government organization sectors specifically involved in handling stunting. Tanoto Foundation, as one of the actor's partners, participated in stunting discussions and deliberations.

Several community organization forums also took part in the discussion, although not all community forums were invited. In actor collaboration activities in handling stunting

TABLE 1: Stakeholders Mapping in Handling Stunting In Brebes Regency.

No	Stakeholders	Institution
1	Government	Dinas Pertanian dan Ketahanan Pangan
		Dinpermades
		Dinas Perikanan
		Dinkominfotik
		Dindikpora
		DPU
		Dinas Peternakan dan Kesehatan Hewan
		Dinas Kesehatan
		Baperlitbangda
		Puskesmas
		Kemanag
		Camat se Kabupaten Brebes
		PAPDESI
2	Non Government Organization (NGO)	Tim Pendamping Keluarga
		Baznas
		IDI
		IBU
		Fatayat NU
		Muslimat Brebes
		Nasyiatul Asyiyah
		Persagi
		PWI
		Forum Masyarakat Madani
		Tenaga Ahli Pendamping Desa
		Korkab PKH
		Harpi
3	Private	APINDO
		APSAI

in the Brebes Regency, it was found that actors were interdependent during program implementation. There is still a lack of participation in the role of the NGO sector, especially non-governmental organizations, both national and international.

In identifying obstacles and opportunities, strategic and critical planning is needed, so that it will expand the discussion space and involve stakeholders from various backgrounds (10). So that obstacles and opportunities can be identified well. It can be

concluded that in the first, stage the concept of identification in sector involvement is good and quite a lot of stakeholders are participating, it is only necessary to implement and plan together in handling stunting in Brebes Regency.

4.2. Second Stage: Debate Strategy to Influence (Dialogue Phase)

This stage is a dialogue stage between stakeholders involved in handling stunting in the Brebes Regency. The step that needs to be taken is to identify the dialogue process between actors. In terms of dealing with stunting in the Brebes Regency, policymakers are holding outreach and training to several stakeholders such as Village Midwives, Posyandu Cadres, TPK, pregnant women, breastfeeding mothers, prospective brides, and teenagers. This socialization and training process also carried out discussions regarding solutions for dealing with stunting in the Brebes Regency.

According to Ratner (7), the debate strategy stage to influence the results of handling stunting is a stage that focuses on the dynamics of interests in each proposal and aspiration which ultimately becomes a priority proposal in handling stunting. The proposed priorities are usually related to human resources, budget, and facilities.

The obstacles that occur in handling stunting in the Brebes Regency are related to coordination and procedures that are still complex. Coordination is needed to clarify the duties and responsibilities of each actor involved. Apart from that, complex procedures are also an obstacle because they reduce interest and motivation for the parties involved.

The Brebes Regency Government in dealing with stunting still does not provide open discussion space for the actors involved, especially the NGO sector. NGOs, both national and international, can play a role in providing food, funds, and even education for communities affected by stunting.

NGOs such as Save the Children, UNICEF, a thousand projects, and Edufarmers which specifically handle stunting cases can be involved and focus on solutions and collaboration. One informant in his interview said that:

“In 2012, Unicef was one of the NGO partners in handling stunting in Brebes Regency. We worked together for 5 (five) years with Unicef to be able to reduce the stunting rate, which at that time was still at 32.7%. However, our contract with Unicef was not renewed. Because at that time, it was enough.”

The involvement of NGOs can also help with the problem of inadequate human resources. This is because NGOs have quite a lot of human resources. The debate strategy process in influencing is very important to be able to hear every aspect, and views from various backgrounds. However, there needs to be a clearer division of tasks so that the planned program can run according to what has been mutually agreed upon.

4.3. Third Stage: Planning Collaborative Action

The third stage is an important step in ensuring successful collaboration between various parties or other stakeholders to achieve common goals (11). The first step taken is that the Baperlitbangda team will make a plan by determining the actors involved in handling stunting in the Brebes Regency. One of the NGOs that currently still plays an active role is the Tanoto Foundation which has contracted for approximately 5 years to be the project controller in handling stunting cases. The Tanoto Foundation is also planning programs that will be carried out in collaboration with the Brebes regional government.

The collaboration program is the establishment of a sprightly children's home in which various activities will be carried out by breastfeeding mothers, pregnant mothers, brides-to-be, and teenagers. Apart from that, there is a data-based program to make it easier to check stunting rates in villages that are part of the Tanoto Foundation pilot project. Involvement of other stakeholders such as government, society, and the private sector can also be carried out so that the chosen strategy can be implemented well and decided together. After that, the evaluation process can be carried out democratically by considering the proposals of all parties.

Tanoto Foundation as one of the NGO actors is involved in creating opportunities in Brebes Regency. The target goal of the Tanoto Foundation is to reduce the stunting rate in Indonesia to less than 20% by 2030. The Tanoto Foundation has extensive operational space in the international arena, such as Singapore and China.

The Brebes Government's success in reducing the stunting rate in 2023 earned it the title of 1st national champion in reducing the stunting rate. This is obtained from joint efforts and work with various sectors involved, namely Government, Private, and NGO.

5. CONCLUSION

Based on research conducted in handling stunting in Brebes Regency, a collaborative governance process has occurred, however, several things need to be noted:

1. Listening phase, stakeholders have identified the actors involved in handling stunting in Brebes Regency, but it is still necessary to expand the reach of actors involved, such as non-government organizations (NGOs), both national and international;
2. Dialogue Phase, local governments have often held training and outreach for pregnant women, breastfeeding mothers, teenagers, prospective brides, and grooms. However, the discussion forum still does not involve all sectors, and only certain sectors are involved in the discussion forum;
3. Choice Phase, one of the NGOs involved has planned a program involving the government and private sectors. So that evaluation can be carried out jointly.

From the description and conclusions, the researcher provides recommendations as material for consideration for the future collaboration process, namely that the Brebes district government needs to expand the NGO network, both national and international so that they can have views from different backgrounds regarding handling stunting in the Brebes Regency. However, in 2023, Brebes will experience a significant decline.

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