



Addressing stunting in Karangwangi: Optimal strategies for toddlers, adolescents, and pregnant women

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ABSTRACT

Stunting is a problem that requires more attention because it can have an impact on children's lives into adulthood, especially the risk of physical and cognitive developmental disorders if not appropriately handled. The service aims to educate the local community through collaboration between the Karangwangi Village PKK Movement Team, BKKBN, Karangwangi Village Health Center, and the Thematic KKN Team of Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia about the dangers of stunting and the importance of a clean and healthy lifestyle (PHBS). The community services were conducted based on the program that had been implemented on July 26-August 26, 2023 in Karangwangi Village through the methods of (a) direct discussion between students and TP-PKK for posyandu activities; (b) community education about stunting in the form of counseling, distributing printed media in the form of posters and brochures directly to counseling participants; (c) socialization to Karangwangi Elementary School students regarding clean and healthy living behavior (PHBS); and (d) health checks in CEKAS activities, and POSBINDU-PTM. The results showed that Karangwangi Village is in a zero stunting condition; government programs and innovative activities support this, so it is expected to prevent and increase public understanding of the dangers of stunting in the Karangwangi Village community.

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ABSTRAK

Stunting menjadi permasalahan yang memerlukan perhatian lebih karena dapat berdampak bagi kehidupan anak hingga dewasa, terutama risiko gangguan perkembangan fisik dan kognitif apabila tidak segera ditangani dengan baik. Pengabdian yang dilakukan bertujuan untuk mengedukasi masyarakat setempat melalui kolaborasi antara Tim Penggerak PKK Desa Karangwangi, BKKBN, Puskesmas Desa Karangwangi, dan Tim KKN Tematik Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia mengenai bahaya stunting dan pentingnya pola hidup bersih dan sehat (PHBS). Pengabdian ini dilakukan berdasarkan program yang telah dilaksanakan pada 26 Juli - 26 Agustus 2023 di Desa Karangwangi melalui metode (a) diskusi secara langsung antara mahasiswa bersama pihak TP-PKK untuk kegiatan posyandu; (b) edukasi masyarakat mengenai stunting dalam bentuk penyuluhan, penyebaran media cetak berupa poster dan brosur secara langsung kepada peserta penyuluhan; (c) sosialisasi kepada siswa SD Karangwangi mengenai perilaku hidup bersih dan sehat (PHBS); dan (d) pengecekan kesehatan dalam kegiatan CEKAS, dan POSBINDU-PTM. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa Desa Karangwangi berada dalam kondisi zero stunting, hal tersebut didukung oleh program pemerintah dan inovasi kegiatan yang ada, sehingga diharapkan dapat mencegah serta meningkatkan pemahaman masyarakat mengenai bahaya stunting di lingkungan masyarakat Desa Karangwangi.

Kata Kunci: balita; ibu hamil; stunting; sosialisasi dan mentoring

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INTRODUCTION

Stunting is a common problem that must be addressed. Stunting causes impaired growth and development in children due to chronic malnutrition and recurrent infections, characterized by a lack of height compared to children of the same age (see: <https://peraturan.bpk.go.id/Details/174964/perpres-no-72-tahun-2021>). The mother's pregnancy influences the condition of the disorder, so assistance to pregnant women is needed to detect high-risk conditions in pregnancy (Indriani *et al.*, 2023). One of these aspects is to pay attention to the food that pregnant women need to consume, ensuring their nutritional needs are met (Nurjanah *et al.*, 2023). Additionally, it is essential to pay attention to the examination visits of pregnant women by health workers, so that they can educate these women about the causes of stunting and its impact on the child's future (Hutasoit *et al.*, 2020). After birth, during the breastfeeding period, one factor that can meet the nutritional needs of toddlers is exclusive breastfeeding for the first 6 months of life (Purnamasari & Rahmawati, 2021). Fulfilling the nutritional needs of children during the toddler period, by providing food intake with a reasonable and appropriate portion, will help the toddler's growth and development process be more optimal (Kuswanti & Azzahra, 2022). In adolescence and beyond, knowledge about nutrition, stunting, and its prevention is an effort that can be made to reduce stunting rates in the future (Asatuti *et al.*, 2021).

Based on the Minister of Health Regulation Nomor 97 Tahun 2014 in Indonesia concerning Health Services for the Pre-Pregnancy Period, Pregnancy, Childbirth, and Postpartum Period, Implementation of Contraceptive Services, and Sexual Health Services, some things that can aggravate the condition of pregnant women are being too young, too old, giving birth too often, and having too close a birth spacing. A mother's gestational age that is too young (under 20 years old) is at very high risk of giving birth to a baby with low birth weight, which affects 20% of stunting cases in Indonesia (Azis *et al.*, 2021). Proper handling of Low Birth Weight and malnutrition in infants is essential to prevent stunting (Nasriyah & Ediyono, 2023). Several factors contribute to the causes of stunting. There is a relationship between prenatal factors (maternal age during pregnancy, nutritional status of the mother during pregnancy), postnatal factors (exclusive breastfeeding, immunization history, infectious diseases), and family characteristics (mother's education, father's occupation, and socioeconomic status) with the occurrence of stunting (Ariati, 2019). The diversity of these factors indicates that the relationship between conditions that do not support children, particularly during the first 1000 days of a child's life (Megawati & Wiramihardja, 2019), plays a crucial role in shaping children's future growth and development.

The President's exceptional attention to the problem of stunting in Indonesia was demonstrated by the development of a national strategy to accelerate the reduction of stunting. This strategy involves various actors, including the government, private sector, academics, communities, philanthropy, and mass media, and is coordinated by the Vice President. The measurement of stunting conditions uses prevalence percentages. Prevalence measures the number or proportion of health problems in a given population (Mamboh *et al.*, 2022), typically assessed at a single point in time (Bidjuni & Mamonto, 2021). The Indonesian Nutrition Status Survey indicates that the prevalence of stunting in Indonesia reached 21.6% in 2022. In 2023, the government has set a target for the stunting prevalence rate to fall to 17 percent; if this target is achieved this year, the target of 14 percent for 2024 is expected to be realized (see: <https://news.republika.co.id/berita/rpszd2349/target-pemerintah-2023-turunkan-angka-stunting-jadi-17-persen>).

Currently, the prevalence of stunting in Cianjur Regency stands at 13.6 percent, down from previous years, when it was 37 percent. For 2023, the Cianjur Regency Government is targeting Zero Stunting (see: <https://cianjur.inews.id/read/324087/dinkes-cianjur-targetkan-akhir-tahun-2023-nol-kasus-stunting>). This target continues to be encouraged and supported by related parties to realize it. This service is the result

of a community service program. Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia, one of the universities located in West Java, plays an active role in stunting prevention by holding a community service program through Kuliah Kerja Nyata Tematik (KKN-T) activities with the theme "Mahasiswa Peduli Stunting (Si Penting)". KKN-T is a Thematic Real Work Lecture in English, and Si Penting is Students Care for Stunting. This program involves students from various faculties and departments conducting work programs to reduce the prevalence of stunting in Indonesia, especially in West Java. The KKN-T program in Karangwangi Village is implemented directly in the local village area. Karangwangi Village, located in Cianjur District, Cianjur Regency, had a population of 5781 in 2023. Karangwangi Village has achieved the Zero Stunting target, but six children are still identified as stunted.

Stunting in adolescents can occur due to nutritional problems during toddlerhood or preschool (Alwi *et al.*, 2022). Malnutrition during toddlerhood, which indicates stunting, will hinder adolescent growth and development in one of the community service programs that has been carried out in order to reduce the prevalence of stunting at the adolescent level, education about anemia and anemia prevention, training, and mentoring, and giving blood supplement tablets (Koka *et al.*, 2022) —still discussing similar services but with different programs. There is also a stunting prevention program with cooking method counseling for pregnant women (Aditya *et al.*, 2023). In addition, there are other programs aimed at reducing the prevalence of stunting, such as the "Sekoper Cinta" activity, which provides participants with briefings and practices related to fulfilling family needs, managing food, clothing, and self-care, as well as waste management and clean water (Nasution dan Kusumawati, 2023). Community empowerment activities, which include presentations and Forum Group Discussions (FGDs), are essential to identify the root of the problem and prioritize community needs. These activities must be carried out in collaboration with the community (Handika, 2020).

Unlike previous similar articles and services, this service includes optimal strategies based on the results of community service carried out by analyzing various programs aimed at reducing the prevalence of stunting in Karangwangi Village, Cianjur Regency, particularly for stunting prevention among toddlers, adolescents, and pregnant women. This community service aims to educate the local community about stunting and promote a clean and healthy lifestyle, while assisting the Karangwangi Village government in achieving zero stunting conditions in the village and reducing the prevalence of stunting in Cianjur Regency. Likewise, the analysis of countermeasure programs can serve as a reference and evaluation for further handling.

METHODS

This service was carried out with various parties, including two village governments, three members of the Family Empowerment and Welfare Movement Team in Indonesia, specifically the Tim Penggerak Pemberdayaan dan Kesejahteraan Keluarga (TP-PKK), three posyandu cadres, village midwives, two groups of UMKM receiving funds from the Ketapang Kencana program, and three community members. The documents needed for this service are the documents of the village government, the Family Empowerment and Welfare Movement Team (TP-PKK), and posyandu, such as Village Regulations, village and TP-PKK profiles, documents of 4 Working Groups from Family Empowerment and Welfare (PKK), Ketapang Kencana program potpourri documents, documentation of the implementation of the posyandu program, and posyandu data archives such as weighing data of toddlers and pregnant women.

The service procedure is carried out in several stages, namely as follows:

1. Preparation.

Conducted by coordinating between KKN-T UPI Si Penting students and the Karangwangi Village government. This activity was carried out in Karangwangi Village, Ciranjang District, Cianjur Regency, from July 26 to August 26, 2023.

2. Implementation.

Conducted by collaborating with TP-PKK, Posyandu cadres, village health centers, village midwives, principals of SMP IT Daarul Fikri, SD Negeri Karang Sari, and PAUD Al-Mubarak. The methods used to implement activities include counseling, socialization, and printed media, such as posters and brochures.

3. Data was collected using interview techniques, observation, and documentation studies. The data were then processed and analyzed using descriptive statistical analysis techniques.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Observation and interview data collected show that Karangwangi Village is one of the stunting-free villages. Based on these conditions, UPI KKN-T students play an active role in maintaining Zero Stunting conditions in Karangwangi Village by conducting various activities and counseling efforts aimed at the local community, involving multiple parties. The following are some of the activities carried out to prevent stunting and implement clean and healthy behavior:

Posyandu Activities

Posyandu activities are one of the flagship work programs of UPI Si Penting KKN-T students. In its implementation, students collaborate with PKK mothers and Karangwangi Village posyandu cadres. Posyandu comprises community members selected from and by the community willing and able to work together in various community activities voluntarily ([Mardhiyah et al., 2021](#)). In Karangwangi Village itself, there are 10 posyandu, each of which is spread across an RW. This posyandu activity is carried out once a month. This work program aims to assist in implementing posyandu activities and see firsthand the condition of toddlers (children aged 0-5 years) and pregnant women in Karangwangi Village. Posyandu activities manifest community participation in maintaining and improving their health status ([Ningsih et al., 2022](#)). Posyandu activities can help monitor the development of toddlers' nutritional status based on results from weighing data and monthly height measurements ([Aditya & Purnaweni, 2017](#)).



Figure 1. Posyandu Activities
Source: Author Documentation 2023

The posyandu activities (**Figure 1**) provide various information that can be further analyzed and used as an indicator of the level of stunting in Karangwangi Village.

First, data on the number of children under five and their growth conditions. Posyandu activities for toddlers include measuring height, weight, arm circumference, and head circumference, as well as counseling on child development using the Maternal and Child Health book. These measurements are routinely carried out monthly for children aged 0-5. To monitor the rate of growth and development of children regularly at the Posyandu. In addition, Posyandu also utilizes the book "Stimulation, Detection, and Early Intervention of Child Growth and Development" in its development monitoring efforts, which involve interviewing the child's parents using a list of questions based on the child development indicators contained in the book.

Second, data on the number of pregnant women and their fetal growth conditions. Posyandu activities for pregnant women include measuring height, weight, arm circumference, and abdominal circumference, as well as an obstetric examination and counseling provided by the village midwife. These measurements are routinely carried out from the first to the third trimester of pregnancy. This measurement aims to determine the nutritional status of pregnant women, as the risk of Chronic Energy Deficiency can be monitored, one of which is by measuring LILA (Suryadi *et al.*, 2023). LILA is the upper arm circumference, and LILA measurement is a way to determine the risk of protein-energy deficiency in women of childbearing age (Wahyuni & Huda, 2019). In addition, posyandu also provides health services for pregnant women, which are provided by village midwives. Pregnant women can check their wombs for free and consult about the growth and development of their fetuses. From the data on posyandu for pregnant women, KKN students also obtained information about the number of early marriages in Karangwangi Village, which amounted to 0 cases of early marriage.

Third, Supplementary Feeding activities at the Karangwangi Village posyandu. Supplementary feeding activities are routinely carried out every month to help ensure nutritional adequacy and improve the nutritional status of children, enabling them to reach the stage of good nutrition according to their age. Supplementary feeding is one of the efforts to accelerate achievements in national development, particularly in alleviating nutritional problems among school children (Ardilla *et al.*, 2023; Nita *et al.*, 2021; Putri & Robani, 2023; Widjowati & Utomo, 2023). The food provided is carefully processed to ensure nutritional content and health for toddlers.

Stunting Counseling

This stunting counseling activity was carried out with the primary targets, namely parents of students at PAUD AI-Mubarak, pregnant women, and all parents of toddlers who attended posyandu (**Figures 1 and 2**). This counseling aims to provide information about stunting, so that the community becomes more aware of the issue of stunting that may affect their children. Parents should pay more attention to their children's nutritional intake and stimulation efforts to prevent stunting.



Figure 2. Counseling at Posyandu
Source: Author Documentation 2023

One cause of stunting is chronic malnutrition in children, especially during the early years of life, which presents a critical window of opportunity for stimulating child development (Astuti *et al.*, 2020; Suryawan *et al.*, 2022; Wells *et al.*, 2020). Therefore, it is crucial to enhance public awareness of the malnutrition problem in children, enabling every sector of society to collaborate in preventing stunting.

Socialization of PHBS

Knowledge about Clean and Healthy Living Behaviors, called PHBS, is also one of the main focuses in implementing the UPI Si Penting KKN-T program. This PHBS Socialization activity was conducted at SD Negeri Karang Sari, targeting 3rd-grade students (**Figure 3**).



Figure 3. Socialization of PHBS
Source: Author Documentation 2023

This socialization aims to educate students to adopt clean and healthy living behaviors by practicing habits such as maintaining environmental hygiene, engaging in regular exercise, and consuming nutritious food (Juwita *et al.*, 2020). This socialization activity explains the benefits and steps of PHBS in the home, school, and community environments. Thus, it is hoped that students can implement the PHBS material they have obtained in these environments.

CEKAS and POSBINDU-PTM Activities

The Health Check activity, known as CEKAS, is a collaborative effort between the Karangwangi Village Health Center, the National Population and Family Planning Agency, TP-PKK Karangwangi Village, and UPI KKN students. This activity was carried out at SMP IT Daarul Fikri on Wednesday (02/08/2023) which was carried out by weighing body weight, measuring height, checking oral and ear hygiene, blood pressure, checking HB, and giving Blood Addition Pills for adolescents who have low blood pressure after the health check, counseling, and socialization activities regarding clean and healthy living behavior in adolescents were continued.

The POSBINDU-PTM activity is collaborative between the Karangwangi Village Health Center, TP-PKK Karangwangi Village, and UPI KKN students. POSBINDU PTM is a form of effort to independently and continuously control risk factors for non-communicable diseases (Mahdur & Sulistiadi, 2020). This activity was carried out on Friday (18/08/2023) at the RW 08 posyandu in Karangwangi Village, which was carried out by checking the history of the disease, weighing, measuring height and abdominal circumference, blood pressure, testing blood sugar levels, and counseling. This activity was carried out to prevent and identify the presence of non-communicable diseases that are often not realized by the sufferer. The existence of non-communicable diseases that are sometimes asymptomatic causes the sufferers not to realize that they have a non-communicable disease. Hence, the community must be aware of this and implement early detection.



Figure 4. CEKAS Activities
Source: Author Documentation 2023



Figure 5. POSBINDU - PTM
Source: Author Documentation 2023

With the Health Check and POSBINDU-PTM activities (**Figures 4 and 5**), it is hoped that they will facilitate community health checks and increase public awareness of the importance of early detection, thereby improving the health status of the Karangwangi Village community.

Innovation of TP-PKK and Ketapang Kencana

To anticipate stunting conditions in Karangwangi Village, the PKK Team and Karangwangi Village officials have implemented several innovations as concrete steps to reduce stunting rates. TP-PKK formulated several movements whose target focus is the community of Karangwangi Village to realize community empowerment in behavior change, realize convergence with various related sectors, increase the degree of public health by preventing and handling stunting problems, and increase family nutrition awareness to prevent and maintain zero stunting status in Karangwangi Village, Ciranjang District, Cianjur Regency. Here are the six innovations of the Karangwangi Village TP-PKK.

First, the GKS (Gerakan Kasih Sayang), or English Love Movement, aims to address health issues in children under five years old who are not covered by the Village Budget. The Compassion Movement is one of the innovative steps that targets individuals, carried out by raising funds for TP-PKK and Karangwangi Village officials. Then, the funds collected are allocated to toddlers who experience health problems.

Second, KKS (Koin Kasih Sayang) in English is a coin of love that aims to improve the quality and status of posyandu, enabling it to grow and develop independently. KKS is done by raising funds through the KKS box provided by each posyandu. The KKS box is usually filled by posyandu cadres, posyandu visitors, including both parents of children, pregnant women, and posyandu supervisors who were present at that time. The funds collected will be allocated and used to meet the needs of the posyandu itself, enabling each posyandu to become more financially independent in meeting all its needs and not depend on funds provided by the village.

Third, the Volunteer Early Action Initiator (SRIKANDI) is a form of rapid response service to sudden health problems in the community. This rapid response service is carried out by a group of volunteers who are on standby to assist people in need and refer them to the nearest facility for quality healthcare.

Fourth, the Saung Pelayanan Masyarakat Siaga, SERASI, is one of the innovations that leverages the synergy between village midwives and standby village management to deliver services to the community on a predetermined schedule.

Fifth, the Community Reading Gardens for the Advancement of Generation Development through Books and Children's Education is named TBM KEMBANG BURUAN. This innovation aims to enhance the quality of knowledge among the younger generation and the community, particularly during the golden age phase (children aged 0-6 years), by providing literacy facilities through the Village Government. The library is managed by TP-PKK and is situated directly adjacent to the Karangwangi Village office. It contains a variety of engaging and informative reading books suitable for all groups, from children to adults. The community can visit and borrow books available in the library on a predetermined schedule, specifically from Monday to Friday, 08:00-15:00 WIB.

Sixth, Self-Development Educational Tourism, named WIDURI, is an environmental introduction program for early childhood, allowing them to become more familiar with their surroundings, especially when government facilities are introduced in the village environment. This program is based on the TP-PKK and the Village Government's awareness of the importance of introducing the surrounding environment to early childhood. This activity is carried out by collaborating with the local PAUD and then visiting the village office, police, TNI, Linmas, and rice fields in the neighborhood, among other locations.

In addition to the six TP-PKK innovations, the Karangwangi Village Government also has an innovation, namely the Karangwangi Food Security Plan, known as Ketapang Kencana. Ketapang Kencana is one of the village programs that primarily aims to maintain food security in Karangwangi Village, ensuring the community's food needs are met and improving the village's economic well-being. In addition, this program is also expected to optimize village assets and create employment opportunities for the village community.

This program has been listed in Karangwangi Village Regulation Nomor 10 Tahun 2022 about Program Ketahanan Pangan Desa, with the name "KETAPANG KENCANA" (Ketahanan Pangan Karangwangi Berencana), which is then detailed in the Decree of the Head of Karangwangi Village Nomor 188/Kep-008?II/2022 Tahun 2022 concerning Determining the Management Structure of the Village Food Barn Management Organization and the Beneficiary Group of the Karangwangi Food Security Program Planned "Ketapang Kencana." The scope of the Ketapang Kencana program includes all types of food fulfillment businesses for the village community, both in agriculture, fisheries, and animal husbandry, which are carried out through village deliberations. The beneficiary groups of this program are UMKM groups formed based on community deliberations. 18 UMKM groups receive funds from the Ketapang Kencana program.

The entire community of Karangwangi Village is the target of this program. Thus, the following are the stages of the Ketapang Kancana program implementation, starting with: a) formation of MSMEs, b) submission of business fund proposals, c) training, d) provision of funds, e) business implementation, and f) monitoring of business sustainability by the village officials on duty. The UMKM groups managing Ketapang Kancana sell their products at a much lower price than the market price. These programs clearly show that the village government and the entire community work together to overcome the stunting disaster in Karangwangi Village. This program is hoped to meet the needs of the Karangwangi Village community when the food sector experiences a decrease in productivity so that it can anticipate stunting in children.

CONCLUSION

KKN-T UPI Si Penting students play an active role in efforts to maintain Zero Stunting conditions in Karangwangi Village by forming various work programs whose primary targets are toddlers, adolescents, and pregnant women. The innovative steps of TP-PKK and Karangwangi Village officials are a breakthrough in optimizing efforts to prevent the spread of stunting, which can simultaneously increase village independence. One of the causes of stunting itself is because children are chronically malnourished and lack developmental stimulation. With routine posyandu activities, counseling and counseling, the CEKAS program, POSBINDU-PTM, the realization of six TP-PKK innovations, and the Ketapang Kancana program, it is hoped that it can increase parents' understanding of the importance of providing balanced nutrition and developmental stimulation to children, improve the nutritional status of toddlers and pregnant women, and meet the food needs of the community when the food sector is experiencing a decline in productivity so that these programs can minimize the occurrence of stunting in children.

Coaching and supervision of the sustainability of the Ketapang Kancana program also need to be carried out so that MSME groups can continue to develop. The village apparatus also needs to conduct socialization about the Ketapang Kancana program so that the entire community can know about it and feel its benefits.

AUTHOR'S NOTE

The author declares that there is no conflict of interest regarding this publication and confirms that the data and content are free from plagiarism.

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