



Strategies to Reduce Stunting Rates Through Increased Awareness and Collective Action in the Community of Setanggor Village East Lombok Regency

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Abstract: Setanggor is one of the villages located in the Sukamulia District, East Lombok Regency, West Nusa Tenggara Province. The community in this village, 80% of whom work as farmers, spends a lot of time in the fields. However, the prevalence of stunting in this village is still relatively high. Therefore, the goal of the Community Service Program (KKN) by the Mataram University's PMD (Community Development Program) during the period of December 2023 to February 2024 is to assist the community in addressing stunting through increasing awareness and collective action in stunting prevention. The methods used include socialization, distribution of nutritious food, and Posyandu (Integrated Health Service Post). The results obtained from these activities include increased awareness and knowledge among the villagers regarding the importance of maintaining a healthy and clean lifestyle, as well as the need for adequate intake of nutritious food to prevent malnutrition in children.

Keywords: Village Setanggor East Lombok; KKN PMD; Stunting Prevention.

Introduction

The problem of malnutrition and stunting are two interconnected issues. Stunting in children is the result of nutrient deficiencies during the first one thousand days of life. As a result, children experience stunting, characterized by chronic malnutrition observed in the weight and height of a child (Ministry of Health of the Republic of Indonesia, 2018). This leads to irreversible physical development impairments in children, resulting in decreased cognitive and motor abilities as well as decreased work performance. Stunting is a condition where a child experiences chronic

malnutrition, with measurements of length or height below the child growth standards set by WHO for toddlers, thus posing a risk of growth and developmental disorders in the early stages of life (Alfarisi et al., 2019; Dewi and Primadewi, 2021). Stunted children have an average Intelligence Quotient (IQ) score eleven points lower than the average IQ score of normal children (Yunitasari, 2012).

Developmental disturbances in children due to malnutrition, if not intervened early, will continue into adulthood and affect the individual's health, social, economic, and cultural well-being. Indonesia has a high prevalence of stunting, estimated at around 36%. The

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most common cause of stunting worldwide is malnutrition, which is partly attributed to inadequate calorie intake in children. This is often due to low nutritional knowledge among parents, especially mothers (Fentiana and Sinarsih, 2018). Several factors associated with stunting include energy and protein deficiencies, frequent occurrence of chronic diseases, inappropriate dietary patterns, and poverty (Akhmad et al., 2016).

West Nusa Tenggara is one of the 12 priority provinces with the highest prevalence of stunting in the country in 2022. According to the Indonesian Nutrition Status Study (SSGI) 2021 data, half of the regions in NTB are categorized as "red" or have the highest stunting prevalence at 31.4%. Specifically, 5 areas are classified as red and 5 areas as yellow, indicating stunting prevalence between 20% and 30%. East Lombok Regency is the largest "red" area in NTB, with a stunting prevalence of 37.6%. This means that out of 100 toddlers in East Lombok, almost 38 toddlers are classified as stunted. This indicates that stunting in East Lombok Regency has not been resolved. One of the villages in East Lombok with stunting issues is Setanggor Village, Sukamulia.

Therefore, the objective of the Community Service Program (KKN) by Mataram University during the period of December 2023 to February 2024 is to assist the community of Setanggor Village in addressing stunting through increasing awareness and collective action in stunting prevention.

Method

The main activities carried out include conducting socialization on stunting prevention strategies, distributing nutritious food, and organizing Posyandu (Integrated Health Service Post) sessions. These activities are conducted by the Mataram University's Community Service Program (KKN) team through three stages: planning, preparation, and implementation.

During the planning stage, the KKN team from Mataram University holds discussions with village staff regarding the work program to be implemented. The purpose of these discussions is to determine the appropriate time and place for conducting the activities.

Following the planning stage is the preparation stage. During this phase, all KKN team members prepare all the necessary tools, materials, and other equipment needed to carry out the activities, including preparing the venue for the activities. In this regard, groups are formed to carry out their respective tasks. The first group is tasked with purchasing all the necessary equipment for the activities, while the second group is responsible for drafting and distributing letters. An invitation is extended to all pregnant mothers and

guardians of stunted toddlers in Setanggor Village. The third group is tasked with cleaning the venue designated for the activities.

After completing the preparation, the final stage is the implementation phase. The activities are carried out sequentially, beginning with a socialization session on stunting prevention strategies. During this session, the Mataram University's KKN PMD team is assisted by teams from the local health center and P3AKB (Integrated Service Center for Women and Children) in the Sukamulia District of East Lombok. Following the socialization, nutritious food is distributed to pregnant mothers and stunted toddlers, and finally, Posyandu sessions are conducted in each hamlet of Setanggor Village. All activities are documented, both in the form of photographs and videos.

Result and Discussion

During the KKN period, the results obtained from all the activities conducted are as follows:

Socialization on Stunting Prevention Strategies

The Socialization on Stunting Prevention Strategies was conducted by the Setanggor Village KKN students on January 22, 2024, at the Setanggor Village Office Hall. The session featured speakers including Mrs. Baiq Sriani Astuti, S.AP, Mr. Eirilwandi, S.Pd from P3AKB in the Sukamulia District, as well as Mrs. Baiq Lilik Setiawati and Fitri Ariyanti from the Dasan Lekong Health Center. Such socialization or educational activities have been proven to be very effective in increasing the knowledge of parents of toddlers in stunting prevention (Rudi, 2020; Muhdar et al., 2019), as well as raising community awareness regarding child development, thereby preventing stunting (Astuti and Wardana, 2019).

During this event, the Setanggor Village KKN students invited the community of Setanggor Village, including all pregnant mothers, mothers of stunted toddlers, and adolescents, to learn about the prevention of stunting. The socialization activities can be observed in Figure 1.



Figure 1. Socialization on Stunting Prevention Strategies

The objective of this activity is to provide information on the various ways to prevent stunting by maintaining a healthy lifestyle and consuming nutritious food. According to the literature, inadequate intake of energy and nutrients plays a significant role in the issue of stunting. Both the quantity and quality of protein intake have effects on the plasma insulin-like growth factor I (IGF-I) levels and the bone matrix proteins, which are essential factors in bone formation. The intake of energy, protein, and zinc, as well as the developmental level, show significant differences between stunted and non-stunted toddlers. Attention to food intake in toddlers is crucial, especially regarding protein and zinc sources, to prevent and address stunting and to enhance brain development.

Distribution of Healthy Food

The distribution of healthy food was conducted by the Setanggor Village KKN students on January 29, 2024. The target recipients of this activity were all pregnant mothers and stunted toddlers. The objective of distributing healthy food is to ensure that they receive adequate nutrition suitable for their developmental needs. For pregnant mothers, sufficient nutrition is provided to support fetal growth and maternal health. Meanwhile, for stunted toddlers, the provision of healthy food aims to address nutritional issues that may hinder growth, allowing them to grow optimally.

According to Waroh (2019), the provision of Ready-to-Use Therapeutic Food (RUTF) in the form of formula or liquid contains all the necessary nutrients required by malnourished toddlers, supplemented with vitamins and minerals with low osmolality and in small portions to facilitate consumption and nutrient absorption. It is further stated that for toddlers experiencing malnutrition, it is important to pay attention to adequate and balanced nutrient density to restore normal physiological and immunological functions and to improve weight gain. The activity of distributing healthy food can be seen in Figure 2.



Figure 2. Distribution of Healthy Food

Posyandu Activities

Posyandu activities in Setanggor Village are conducted once a month in each hamlet. The Setanggor Village KKN students participate in assisting with Posyandu activities such as weighing children, measuring their height, distributing food, and helping to record Posyandu data. This activity aims to support maternal and child health programs and strengthen the role of Posyandu as a primary health care center at the village level. Through this participation, students can make a positive contribution to community well-being. Posyandu activities can be observed in Figure 3.



Figure 3. Posyandu activities

Conclusion

Based on the explanations above, it can be concluded that the community empowerment program in realizing a stunting-free healthy village in Setanggor Village can help increase awareness and understanding among the villagers about the importance of maintaining a healthy and clean lifestyle, as well as ensuring adequate nutritional intake for children, which is one of the crucial strategies in stunting prevention.

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