

Community Empowerment Plan In Overcoming Malnutrition

Wilya Achmad

Department of Social Welfare, Faculty of Social Science and Political Science,
Universitas Pasundan, Bandung, Indonesia

Email: wilyaachmad@unpas.ac.id

Abstract

Malnutrition status in children is an important thing that must be known by every parent and malnutrition can affect children's brain development. Malnutrition status includes chronic nutritional problems caused by many factors such as socioeconomic conditions, maternal nutrition during pregnancy, illness in infants, and lack of nutritional intake in infants. To overcome this, the active role of the community is needed through a community empowerment plan. This study aims to investigate community empowerment plans in tackling malnutrition. This research will use qualitative methods with descriptive analysis. This research will also examine documents related to community empowerment programs in tackling malnutrition. The results of this study are expected to provide recommendations for related parties in the development of community empowerment programs that are more effective in tackling malnutrition.

Keywords: *Planning, Community Empowerment, Malnutrition, Toddlers.*

1. Introduction

The degree of health is the level of the health condition of an individual, group or community as measured by mortality, morbidity, life expectancy and nutritional status. (Furtuna, 2012). Malnutrition is the worst (acute) form of the process of malnutrition. Toddlers who are healthy or malnourished are known from their weight gain until they are 2 years old. If body weight corresponds to age according to World Health Organization standards. If it is slightly below the standard, it is said to be poorly nutritious (Nency & Arifin, 2005)

Malnutrition is a significant threat to public health and has a negative impact on the standard of living of the general population. One of the most important aspects that determines the caliber of a country's human resources is its nutritional status. A good nutritional state will result in the creation of human resources that are of high quality, healthy, intellectual, and productive. A nutritional status that is inadequate or suboptimal will have negative effects on growth, development, and IQ, in addition to possibly causing other disorders (Hardiansyah & Supariasa, 2017). Nutritional issues can affect people of any age, including infants and toddlers, children in elementary school, young women of childbearing age, expecting mothers, and even the elderly.

There are approximately 19.6 million children in Indonesia who are affected by stunting or stunted growth, both of which are caused by a deficiency in appropriate and nutrient-rich nutrition, according to data provided by the Indonesian Ministry of Health. According to the findings of the Regional Health Research (Riskesda) conducted in 2018, the prevalence of malnutrition was found to be 17.9% across the country. This figure was comprised of 4.9% malnutrition and 13.0% malnutrition. It is estimated that 15% of children under the age of five all over the world are underweight, and it is documented that in many countries, one out of every three children dies each year owing to low quality nutrition (Rahmawati et al, 2020).

Various strategies have been developed to prevent and overcome the problem of undernutrition and found malnutrition, such as supplementary feeding programs, programs to improve food quality and availability, and community empowerment programs. Community empowerment programs are carried out to increase community participation in efforts to overcome malnutrition, and enable the community to participate more in overcoming the problem of malnutrition (Aidha, 2017).

An endeavor to raise the dignity of segments of our society that are presently unable to break free of the cycle of poverty and underdevelopment is what we mean when we talk about community empowerment. To put it another way, empowering means enabling people as well as empowering the community. Training is a process that involves teaching particular knowledge, abilities, and attitudes to individuals in order to make them more knowledgeable and improve their ability to carry out their obligations in accordance with standards (Siswanti et al, 2016; Rastuti et al., 2018).

The utilization of diverse poultry or fish livestock in the community is one kind of empowerment that can promote nutrition. This can also improve the economic situation of families, which in turn improves the nutrition of families. Education that takes place outside of the formal education system is aimed at rural and urban communities and is managed by the communities themselves. This type of education gives communities the opportunity to develop various learning models, with the goal of improving the residents' quality of life by allowing them to make better use of their yards and other outdoor spaces (Asuti et al., 2020).

Even though the community empowerment program in tackling malnutrition has been carried out for a long time, there are still many problems and challenges in its implementation. Several factors, such as lack of community participation and involvement, lack of support from the government, and lack of access to information and resources, often become obstacles to the success of community empowerment programs in tackling malnutrition (Baihaki, 2017).

In designing a community empowerment program in tackling malnutrition, several factors need to be considered that influence its success. These factors include community participation and involvement, government support, access to information and resources, and program sustainability. Therefore, this study will also evaluate the extent to which community empowerment programs in tackling malnutrition pay attention to these factors, as well as provide recommendations to increase program effectiveness.

The results of this study are expected to provide a more in-depth understanding of community empowerment programs in tackling malnutrition, as well as provide recommendations for related parties in increasing program effectiveness. In addition, this research is also expected to contribute to the development of community empowerment models that can be applied in overcoming other public health problems.

Through this research, it is hoped that it can make a significant contribution to efforts to overcome malnutrition in Indonesia, especially in increasing community participation and involvement in empowerment programs. In addition, the results of this study can also be a reference for other researchers in evaluating community empowerment programs in the health sector.

2. Method

The research technique can be thought of as a scientific approach to gathering data with specific aims and applications. The scientific method, the data, the purpose, and the usability of the findings are the four aspects that need to be taken into consideration. The research method is also a helpful tool that can speed up the process of putting findings into practice (Sugiyono, 2011). A qualitative method is

being taken for this particular piece of research. In their book Moleong (2014), Bodgan and Taylor define a qualitative approach as a kind of study that generates data in the form of written words from individuals, actors who can be observed firsthand. In other words, a qualitative approach creates textual data. This research also takes a descriptive method, which means that it tries to describe, record, and analyze the situations that already exist and are occurring. Aside from that, a descriptive approach is an approach that explains and explains events that aim to find out a situation regarding what and how, how much, to what extent, and so on. This is according to Suharsimin Arikunto (2010), who states that a descriptive approach is an approach that explains and explains events.

3. Result and Discussion

1. Community empowerment

Empowerment is a process carried out as an effort to increase the ability of people (poor, marginal, marginalized) to become empowered by being independent and changing lives for the better with their abilities. By obtaining opportunities or accessing the resources and services needed to improve the quality and quality of life (Noor, 2011).

Community empowerment is an endeavor to raise the dignity of members of society who are currently unable to break free from the cycle of poverty and underdevelopment. In other words, empowerment is the process of enabling and empowering a community. Its relevance to community empowerment in research is for those who are malnourished and for the community to overcome their lack of information. Efforts to improve feeding patterns, psychosocial stimulation, hygiene/hygiene practices, environmental sanitation, and health-care use play a significant influence in improving children's nutrition (Rudiyanto et al, 2021).

It is hoped that the community can increase the dignity of layers of society that are currently unable to escape the trap of poverty and underdevelopment, particularly for children who have a lower level of intelligence, are more vulnerable to disease, and may face lower levels of productivity in the future. In the end, malnutrition will impede economic progress and exacerbate poverty. To improve the welfare of the community, it is necessary to take out phases and efforts to empower and employ the community optimally and humanely, hence empowerment is required.

Community empowerment results in the establishment of a more cognitive community. Cognitive circumstances are simply the ability of a person or society to think in order to solve problems based on their knowledge and insight. The conative condition is a developed attitude of community behavior aimed at behavior that is attentive to the values of development and empowerment. Affective state is a community-owned sense that is intended to be intervened in order to achieve empowerment in attitudes and behavior. Physicomotor abilities are talents that the community possesses in order to assist the community in carrying out development activities (Lesnussa, 2019). Empowerment in these four areas (cognitive, affective, conative, and physicomotor) has the potential to contribute to the construction of the desired communal independence. As a result, there will be sufficient insight in society, which is armed with enough abilities, and which is enhanced by a sense of the need for development and behavior that is aware of this need.

A method is required to achieve communal independence. The community will progressively gain these abilities through the learning process; the community must go through a learning process. Ability/power will be obtained from time to time as a result of this learning process. In this manner, enough capacity will be gathered to ensure their independence. What is intended from empowerment, which is a visual representation of social growth, is the creation of a decent

community and an ideal society. To complete a good community, competencies such as the ability to identify problems and community needs, the ability to achieve opportunities regarding goals to be achieved and priorities, the ability to find and agree on ways and means of achieving agreed goals, and the ability to work together rationally in acting to achieve objectives must be added. These are supporting competencies that enable the community to consider, seek, and choose the best solutions for social development (Febrianti & Suprojo, 2019).

The goal of community empowerment in combating malnutrition is to provide knowledge, broaden horizons, and provide motivation related to empowering the community in combating stunting through training, controlling each posyandu, providing nutritious food assistance to stunted people, and utilizing their own potential and the surrounding environment, such as natural resources. natural. Can promote public health, thereby improving the well-being of himself, his family, and the surrounding community. It has the potential to completely eliminate stunting in the village. May help stunted patients recover from trauma and challenges, allowing them to regain self-confidence and return to society to participate in activities as they should.

2. Malnutrition

Malnutrition is a nutritional status based on weight-for-age index (BB/U) which is the equivalent of the terms underweight (underweight) and severely underweight (malnutrition). Toddlers are called severely malnourished if their weight-for-age index (BB/U) is less than -3 SD (Furtuna, 2012). Malnutrition (severe malnutrition) is a technical term generally used by nutrition, health and medical circles. Malnutrition is the worst form of the process of chronic malnutrition (Handayani, 2017).

WHO states that many factors can lead to malnutrition, most of which are related to poor diet, severe and recurrent infections, especially in underprivileged populations. Inadequate diet, and infectious diseases are closely related to the general standard of living, environmental conditions, ability to meet basic needs such as food, housing and health care. Many factors influence the occurrence of malnutrition, including socioeconomic status, ignorance of mothers about providing good nutrition for children, and Low Birth Weight (LBW) (Kusriadi, 2010). Malnutrition based on clinical symptoms can be divided into 3, namely (Anisa et al, 2019):

- a. Marasmus. Marasmus occurs due to insufficient calorie intake. Marasmus is very common in infants under 12 months. In the case of marasmus, the child looks emaciated so that the face is like that of an old man, the skin is wrinkled, whiny and fussy even after eating, the stomach is sunken, the hair is thin, sparse and dull, the ribs are clearly visible and the buttocks are loose and wrinkled (baggy pants).
- b. Kwashiorkor . Kwashiorkor is a form of severe protein malnutrition caused by normal or high carbohydrate intake but inadequate protein intake. Some specific signs of kwashiorkor are: hair that turns reddish or gray in color, thinning and falls out easily, when curly hair straightens, skin looks pale and is usually accompanied by anemia, dyspigmentation occurs due to depleted energy or protein reserves. Skin that has dispigmentation will appear pale. Dermatitis (inflammation of the skin) often occurs. Swelling occurs, especially on the feet and lower legs so that toddlers look fat. The swelling that occurs is caused by excessive fluid accumulation. Toddlers have fickle tastes and are prone to digestive disorders.
- c. Marasmus-Kwashiorkor Shows mixed symptoms of marasmus and kwashiorkor. Daily food does not contain enough protein and energy for normal growth. Patients with a body weight below 60% of normal show signs of kwashiorkor such as edema, hair disorders, skin disorders and biochemical abnormalities.

Researchers summarize some of the things that cause malnutrition. The causes include :

- a. Consumption of less nutrients can cause delays in body growth and delay in brain development and can also decrease or lower the body's resistance to infectious diseases (Ruaida (2018).

- b. Infection and malnutrition are always closely related. Infections in malnourished children are mostly caused by impaired immune function, limited immune production and/or reduced functional capacity of all cellular components of the immune system in malnourished patients (Bili et al, 2020).
- c. Mother's knowledge about toddler nutrition is all forms of information owned by the mother regarding the nutrients needed for the toddler's body and the mother's ability to apply them in everyday life. Lack of knowledge about nutrition will result in reduced ability to apply information in daily life which is one of the causes of nutritional disorders (Tridiyawati & Handoko, 2019).
- d. Parenting eating patterns are parenting practices applied by mothers to children under five related to the way and situation of eating. Good parenting from the mother will make a major contribution to the growth and development of toddlers so that it will reduce the incidence of nutritional disorders and vice versa (Renyonet, 2013).
- e. The level of family income is an external factor that affects the nutritional status of toddlers. Families with middle to lower economic status allow consumption of food and nutrition, especially in low-fives and this affects the nutritional status of children under five (Illahi, 2017).

3. Community Empowerment Plan in Overcoming Malnutrition

Community empowerment is an important approach in efforts to overcome malnutrition. There are several community empowerment plans that can be implemented to address malnutrition, namely nutrition counseling, skills training, development of mothers' groups, use of technology, participatory approaches, and cross-sector collaboration.

Nutrition education can be done through various media, such as brochures, videos, and presentations. In addition, this can also be done through socialization activities in the community, such as malnutrition campaigns. It is important to ensure that this counseling can be carried out routinely and continuously, so that the community can continue to obtain knowledge and information about nutrition. Skills training can also be carried out by involving experts in agriculture, animal husbandry and fisheries. In addition, it can also be done by holding courses or training for the local community. This skills training can provide the community with skills in producing a higher quality and variety of food, thereby reducing the risk of malnutrition.

The development of women's groups can be done by strengthening the organization and network of women's groups in various regions. Apart from that, this can also be done by providing capital and technological assistance so that groups of mothers can produce food of a higher quality and variety. Thus, mothers' groups can play a more active role in overcoming malnutrition in society. Besides that, the use of technology can be done by utilizing nutritional applications, websites, and social media. In this case, it is necessary to cooperate with institutions or organizations that already have experience in using technology to overcome malnutrition. This technology can help the public to easily obtain information about nutrition, thereby increasing public awareness about the importance of balanced nutrition.

Furthermore, a participatory approach can be carried out by holding meetings in the community or through discussion forums. In this regard, it is important to provide opportunities for the community to express opinions and input in program planning and implementation. By actively involving the community, programs that are more relevant and effective in overcoming malnutrition can be produced. Cross-sector cooperation can be carried out by involving the government, the community, private organizations and international institutions. In this regard, it is important to ensure that there

is effective synergy and collaboration between various parties, so that programs that are sustainable and provide optimal benefits to the community can be produced.

In addition, it is also necessary to take a special approach to groups of people who are vulnerable to malnutrition, such as children, pregnant women and the elderly. For children, it is necessary to prevent malnutrition from an early age, namely through immunization, setting a good diet, and providing additional food. Meanwhile, for pregnant women, it is necessary to provide education about healthy eating patterns and setting schedules for prenatal care. In addition, the elderly also need to be given special attention, by ensuring their diet is balanced and contains sufficient nutrition. In addition to community empowerment programs, it is also necessary to carry out supervision and monitoring of nutritional conditions in the community. This monitoring can be done through routine anthropometric examinations, namely measurements of body weight, height, and upper arm circumference. From these measurements, it can be seen whether there has been an increase or decrease in cases of malnutrition in the community, so that more appropriate steps can be taken.

Provision of additional food also needs to be done for people who experience malnutrition. These additional foods can be in the form of foods rich in protein and vitamins, such as eggs, meat, milk, and fruits. It is important to ensure the availability of this additional food in the community, so that it can be given to those in need. Finally, it is necessary to evaluate and assess the community empowerment program in overcoming malnutrition. This evaluation aims to determine the effectiveness of the program and identify deficiencies that need to be corrected. Thus, the resulting programs can be more effective and provide optimal benefits for people in need.

Even though community empowerment is an effective strategy for tackling malnutrition, there are still various challenges faced in its implementation. The following are some of the challenges that are often faced in community empowerment to overcome malnutrition:

- a) Limited resources: Limited resources are one of the main challenges in empowering communities to tackle malnutrition. Limited resources, such as funds and personnel, hinder the implementation of empowerment programs, making it difficult to achieve optimal results.
- b) Community culture: Another challenge faced is the societal culture that is difficult to change. Some communities still adhere to traditional beliefs that make it difficult for them to receive information and advice about healthy eating patterns. In addition, there are also people who have wrong beliefs about certain foods, making it difficult to change their eating patterns.
- c) Lack of coordination between stakeholders: Another challenge in empowering communities to tackle malnutrition is the lack of coordination between the various stakeholders involved in empowerment programs. Imbalance between different resources, priorities and programs can cause conflicts that hinder optimal implementation of empowerment programs.
- d) Low public awareness: Low public awareness of the importance of balanced nutrition is also a challenge in empowering communities to tackle malnutrition. People who are less aware of the importance of balanced nutrition will find it difficult to participate in empowerment programs and change their eating habits.
- e) Climate change: Climate change can also be a challenge in empowering communities to tackle malnutrition. Climate change can disrupt the availability of food and nutrition, impacting people's ability to produce and access healthy and nutritious food.
- f) Conflict and insecurity: Conflict and insecurity that occur in an area is also a challenge in empowering communities to tackle malnutrition. Conflict and insecurity can disrupt the

distribution of additional food to areas of need, and can affect people's access to needed resources.

- g) Dependence on aid: The community's dependence on assistance from the government or non-governmental organizations is also a challenge in empowering communities to tackle malnutrition. This dependency can reduce people's motivation to seek sustainable long-term solutions.
- h) Policies that do not support: Policies that do not support are also a challenge in empowering communities to overcome malnutrition. Inappropriate policies can limit people's access to needed resources and empowerment programs, thereby hampering efforts to tackle malnutrition.

In facing these challenges, systematic and comprehensive efforts are needed to increase the effectiveness of community empowerment programs in tackling malnutrition. The government and non-governmental organizations need to work together in building adequate infrastructure, adopting the right strategy, and building effective coordination with the community. In addition, efforts to raise public awareness about the importance of balanced nutrition also need to be continued through educational programs and health campaigns. All of these efforts need to be carried out in a sustainable manner and involve various related parties to achieve optimal results in tackling malnutrition in the community.

4. Conclusion

Community empowerment has an important role in tackling the problem of malnutrition in society. In community empowerment, systematic and comprehensive efforts are needed to increase program effectiveness, overcome challenges faced, and involve various related parties to achieve optimal results. Several strategies that can be implemented in community empowerment include a participatory approach, a bottom-up approach, and the use of information and communication technology. In addition, the government and non-governmental organizations need to work together in building adequate infrastructure, adopting the right strategy, and building effective coordination with the community. However, in community empowerment, there are also challenges such as low levels of nutrition literacy and awareness, lack of access to resources, gender imbalance, conflict and insecurity, and dependence on aid. Therefore, continuous efforts are needed to increase public awareness about the importance of maintaining family nutritional status to avoid malnutrition.

5. Acknowledgments

This research was funded by the Wiley Institute Research Institute in collaboration with Corporate Social Responsibility which is engaged specifically in the issue of stunting management. This research was conducted for 6 months from December 2022 to March 2023.

6. References

- Aidha, Z. (2017). Analisis implementasi pemberdayaan masyarakat dalam strategi promosi Kesehatan dan pengaruhnya terhadap partisipasi masyarakat dalam pencegahan gizi buruk pada balita di kecamatan Helvetia Medan. *JUMANTIK (Jurnal Ilmiah Penelitian Kesehatan)*, 2(2), 31-41.
- Anisa, A. F., Darozat, A., Aliyudin, A., Maharani, A., Fauzan, A. I., Fahmi, B. A., ... & Hamim, E. A. (2019). Permasalahan Gizi Masyarakat Dan Upaya Perbaikannya. *agroteknologi*.
- Arikunto, S. (2010). Metode peneltian. *Jakarta: Rineka Cipta*, 173.

- Astuti, D. D., Adriani, R. B., & Handayani, T. W. (2020). Pemberdayaan masyarakat dalam rangka stop generasi stunting. *JMM (Jurnal Masyarakat Mandiri)*, 4(2), 156-162.
- Baihaki, E. S. (2017). Gizi buruk dalam perspektif Islam: Respon teologis terhadap persoalan gizi buruk. *SHAHIH: Journal of Islamicate Multidisciplinary*, 2(2).
- Bili, A., Jutomo, L., & Boeky, D. L. (2020). Faktor Risiko Kejadian Gizi Kurang pada Anak Balita di Puskesmas Palla Kabupaten Sumba Barat Daya. *Media Kesehatan Masyarakat*, 2(2), 33-41.
- Febrianti, D., & Suprojo, A. (2019). Analisis dampak wisata terhadap pemberdayaan Masyarakat. *Jurnal Ilmu Sosial dan Ilmu Politik (JISIP)*, 8(3), 75-82.
- Furtuna, D. K. (2012). SITUASI KESEHATAN MASYARAKAT DI INDONESIA. *Journal Ilmu Sosial, Politik dan Pemerintahan*, 1(1), 1-6.
- Handayani, R. (2017). Faktor-faktor yang berhubungan dengan status gizi pada anak balita. *Jurnal Endurance*, 2(2), 217-224.
- Hardiansyah, M., & Supariasa, I. (2017). Ilmu gizi teori dan aplikasi (Nutrition theory and application). Jakarta: PT Raja Grafindo Persada.
- Illahi, R. K. (2017). Hubungan pendapatan keluarga, berat lahir, dan panjang lahir dengan kejadian stunting balita 24-59 bulan di Bangkalan. *Jurnal manajemen kesehatan yayasan RS. Dr. Soetomo*, 3(1), 1-7.
- Kusriadi. (2010). Analisa Faktor Risiko Yang Mempengaruhi Kejadian Gizi Kurang Pada Balita di Provinsi Nusa Tenggara Barat. Bogor: IPB Press.
- Lesnussa, J. U. (2019). Evaluasi Pemberdayaan Masyarakat Di Negeri Halong Baguala Ambon. *Jurnal Sosio Sains*, 5(2), 91-107.
- Moleong, L. J. (2014). Metode penelitian kualitatif edisi revisi. Bandung: PT Remaja Rosdakarya.
- Nency, Y., & Arifin, M. T. (2005). Gizi Buruk, Ancaman Generasi yang Hilang. *Inovasi*, 5, 61-64.
- Noor, M. (2011). Pemberdayaan masyarakat. *CIVIS: Jurnal Ilmiah Ilmu Sosial dan Pendidikan Kewarganegaraan*, 1(2).
- Rahmawati, N. F., Fajar, N. A., & Idris, H. (2020). Faktor sosial, ekonomi, dan pemanfaatan posyandu dengan kejadian stunting balita keluarga miskin penerima PKH di Palembang. *Jurnal Gizi Klinik Indonesia*, 17(1), 23.
- Rastuti, T., Fatimah, U. D., & Pharmacist, G. (2018). A The Empowerment of Communal and Social-Cultural Value in Pyramid Scheme Dispute Settlement. *Journal Sampurasun: Interdisciplinary Studies for Cultural Heritage*, 4(2), 108-120.
- Renyoet, B. S. (2013). *Hubungan pola asuh dengan kejadian stunting anak usia 6-23 bulan di wilayah pesisir kecamatan tallo kota makassar* (Doctoral dissertation, Universitas Hassanuddin).
- Ruaida, N. (2018). Gerakan 1000 hari Pertama Kehidupan Mencegah Terjadinya Stunting (Gizi Pendek) di Indonesia. *Global Health Science*, 3(2), 139-151.
- Rudiyanto, W., Sari, R. D. P., & Sutarto, S. (2021). Pemberdayaan Masyarakat untuk Perbaikan Gizi Balita di Desa Karang Anyar Kecamatan Jati Agung Kabupaten Lampung Selatan. *JPM (Jurnal Pengabdian Masyarakat) Ruwa Jurai*, 6(1), 117-121.
- Siswanti, A. D., Muadi, S., & Chawa, A. F. (2016). Peran pendampingan dalam program pemberdayaan masyarakat (studi pada program pendampingan keluarga balita gizi buruk di kecamatan semampir kota surabaya). *Wacana Journal of Social and Humanity Studies*, 19(3).
- Sugiyono, P. (2011). Metodologi penelitian kuantitatif kualitatif dan R&D. *Alfabeta, Bandung*, 62-70.
- Tridiyawati, F., & Handoko, A. A. R. (2019). Hubungan antara status sosial ekonomi dan pengetahuan ibu dengan kejadian gizi kurang pada balita. *Jurnal Ilmu Kesehatan Masyarakat*, 8(01), 20-24.