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## Strengthening The Integration Of Specific And Sensitive Interventions In Regional Planning And Budgeting To Prevent And Accelerate The Reduction Of Stunting In Gianyar Regency

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### Abstrak

Stunting merupakan permasalahan pembangunan manusia yang berdampak jangka panjang terhadap kualitas sumber daya manusia, produktivitas ekonomi, dan daya saing daerah. Upaya percepatan penurunan stunting menuntut integrasi intervensi spesifik dan sensitif lintas sektor dalam sistem perencanaan dan penganggaran daerah. Meskipun Kabupaten Gianyar menunjukkan capaian prevalensi stunting yang relatif rendah dibanding rata-rata nasional, masih terdapat tantangan dalam memastikan integrasi kebijakan secara sistemik dalam dokumen perencanaan pembangunan daerah. Makalah kebijakan ini bertujuan menganalisis permasalahan integrasi intervensi stunting lintas sektor serta merumuskan alternatif kebijakan yang paling efektif untuk memperkuat konvergensi perencanaan dan penganggaran daerah. Penelitian menggunakan pendekatan analisis kebijakan publik dengan metode kualitatif berbasis kajian dokumen kebijakan nasional dan daerah serta analisis alternatif kebijakan menggunakan kerangka Bardach. Analisis difokuskan pada keterkaitan regulasi, tata kelola kelembagaan, serta sistem perencanaan dan penganggaran daerah dalam mendukung percepatan penurunan stunting. Hasil kajian menunjukkan bahwa permasalahan utama terletak pada lemahnya pengikatan regulasi daerah, pendekatan sektoral dalam perencanaan perangkat daerah, serta penganggaran yang belum berbasis kinerja dan outcome stunting. Kondisi ini menyebabkan intervensi spesifik dan sensitif berjalan secara parsial sehingga efektivitas belanja daerah belum optimal dalam mendukung penurunan prevalensi stunting. Makalah ini membandingkan tiga alternatif kebijakan, yaitu mempertahankan kondisi saat ini, penerbitan surat edaran kepala daerah, dan penetapan regulasi daerah berupa Peraturan Bupati yang diperkuat dengan Keputusan Bupati. Hasil analisis menunjukkan bahwa alternatif penetapan regulasi daerah memberikan efektivitas tertinggi dalam mengintegrasikan kebijakan lintas sektor, meningkatkan efisiensi anggaran, serta memperkuat akuntabilitas implementasi. Oleh karena itu, direkomendasikan penyusunan regulasi yang mengikat integrasi intervensi stunting dalam dokumen perencanaan dan penganggaran daerah guna mendukung tata kelola pembangunan berbasis konvergensi serta mempercepat pencapaian target penurunan stunting secara berkelanjutan.

### Abstract

Stunting represents a major human development challenge with long-term consequences for human capital quality, economic productivity, and regional

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competitiveness. Efforts to accelerate stunting reduction require the integration of nutrition-specific and nutrition-sensitive interventions across sectors within regional planning and budgeting systems. Although Gianyar Regency has achieved relatively low stunting prevalence compared to the national average, challenges remain in ensuring systematic policy integration within regional development planning documents. This policy paper aims to analyze issues related to cross-sectoral integration of stunting interventions and to formulate the most effective policy alternatives for strengthening convergence in regional planning and budgeting. This study employs a public policy analysis approach using qualitative methods based on a review of national and regional policy documents. Alternative policy options are assessed using Bardach's analytical framework. The analysis focuses on regulatory linkages, institutional governance, and regional planning and budgeting mechanisms in supporting accelerated stunting reduction. The findings indicate that the main challenges lie in weak regulatory binding at the regional level, sectoral approaches in local agency planning, and budgeting practices that are not yet performance- or outcome-oriented toward stunting reduction. These conditions result in fragmented implementation of specific and sensitive interventions, limiting the effectiveness of public expenditure in reducing stunting prevalence. Three policy alternatives are compared: maintaining the status quo, issuing an executive circular, and establishing binding regional regulations supported by annual executive decrees. The analysis shows that the regulatory approach provides the highest effectiveness in integrating cross-sectoral policies, improving budget efficiency, and strengthening implementation accountability. Therefore, the paper recommends the formulation of binding regional regulations to ensure the integration of stunting interventions into planning and budgeting documents, thereby enhancing convergence-based governance and accelerating sustainable stunting reduction outcomes.

## **Introduction**

Stunting remains a critical indicator of human development quality because it reflects chronic nutritional deprivation and repeated infections that impair children's physical growth and cognitive development. Its long-term consequences extend beyond health outcomes to reduced productivity, lower economic competitiveness, and increased risk of degenerative disease in adulthood. Therefore, stunting is widely recognized as a multidimensional development challenge requiring integrated and sustained policy responses (Badan Perencanaan Pembangunan Nasional [Bappenas], 2018). Globally and nationally, the urgency of addressing stunting has led governments to prioritize integrated intervention strategies. In Indonesia, the acceleration of stunting reduction has been institutionalized through national policy frameworks that mandate multisectoral coordination and convergence between nutrition-specific and nutrition-sensitive interventions. These integrated strategies are emphasized in national development planning guidelines as essential for achieving sustainable

human capital outcomes (Bappenas, 2021). Nutrition-specific interventions target the immediate determinants of stunting, including maternal nutrition, infant feeding practices, micronutrient supplementation, and disease prevention. However, empirical policy frameworks indicate that these measures alone cannot achieve optimal outcomes without addressing broader structural determinants of health. Nutrition-sensitive interventions such as sanitation, water access, and social protection play a complementary role in strengthening child growth outcomes and long-term nutritional resilience (De Hoop et al., 2025).

At the regional level, policy integration is closely linked to planning and budgeting mechanisms. Development planning and fiscal allocation are key instruments for ensuring continuity and effectiveness of stunting interventions across sectors. Evidence from integrated planning frameworks suggests that without systematic alignment between development priorities and expenditure strategies, program implementation tends to remain fragmented and outcome measurement becomes limited (Bappenas, 2020). Gianyar Regency in Bali has shown significant progress in reducing stunting prevalence over the past decade, demonstrating the impact of sustained public health and social policy interventions. Nonetheless, fluctuations in prevalence rates reported through national surveys indicate that continued policy reinforcement is necessary to maintain progress and avoid regression. These dynamics highlight the importance of adaptive governance mechanisms that respond to evolving development challenges (Kementerian PPN/Bappenas, 2018).

Despite these achievements, structural challenges persist in aligning sectoral programs toward unified outcomes. Programs addressing health, sanitation, housing, and social welfare are often implemented independently across local agencies, reflecting a sector-oriented planning culture. Such fragmentation limits policy coherence and weakens the collective contribution of public spending toward reducing stunting prevalence (Kurniawan et al., 2025). The absence of binding regulatory mechanisms at the regional level represents another critical constraint. Without formal mandates requiring integration of stunting outcomes into planning and budgeting documents, policy convergence relies heavily on coordination rather than institutional obligation. Studies on governance integration show that weak regulatory alignment reduces accountability and undermines cross-sectoral collaboration in development planning (Agus et al., 2025).

Weak coordination is further compounded by limitations in performance-based budgeting practices. Budget allocations often remain routine-based rather than outcome-oriented, preventing effective tracking of sectoral contributions toward stunting reduction

targets. This misalignment between fiscal planning and development outcomes reflects broader challenges in implementing performance-based budgeting frameworks within local governance systems (Fauziah et al., 2025). Policy analysis frameworks emphasize the need to evaluate alternative solutions that balance effectiveness, feasibility, and efficiency in addressing complex public problems. Bardach's analytical approach provides structured guidance for comparing policy options and identifying strategies capable of strengthening institutional accountability and cross-sectoral coordination within public governance systems (Bardach, 2012). Accordingly, this study examines the policy problem of insufficient integration between nutrition-specific and nutrition-sensitive interventions within regional planning and budgeting systems. By analyzing institutional, regulatory, and fiscal dimensions, the paper seeks to formulate policy alternatives that strengthen convergence-based governance and enhance the effectiveness of regional stunting reduction initiatives. This contributes to broader discourse on multisectoral policy integration as a foundation for sustainable human development outcomes (Mastina & Mitra, 2025).

In light of these considerations, strengthening policy integration within regional governance structures becomes essential for sustaining progress in stunting reduction. The complexity of the issue demands regulatory alignment, coordinated institutional roles, and performance-oriented budgeting that collectively translate national priorities into actionable local strategies. By addressing structural gaps in planning and fiscal synchronization, regional governments can enhance policy coherence and accountability across sectors. Therefore, this study positions integrated regulatory intervention as a strategic pathway for improving convergence in development planning and ensuring that multisectoral efforts contribute measurably to long-term human development outcomes and sustainable stunting reduction (Bappenas, 2020; Agus et al., 2025).

## **Method**

### **Research Design**

This study employed a qualitative policy analysis design to examine the integration of stunting intervention policies within regional planning and budgeting systems. The approach focused on identifying institutional, regulatory, and fiscal gaps that influence cross-sectoral convergence. Policy analysis was conducted using an analytical framework adapted from Bardach's eightfold path, which emphasizes problem definition, alternative formulation, and

comparative evaluation of policy options (Bardach, 2012). This design allowed systematic exploration of feasible solutions within the context of regional governance.

### **Data Sources**

Data were obtained through document-based analysis of national and regional policy materials relevant to stunting reduction. These included strategic development planning documents, regulatory frameworks, program guidelines, and budgeting policy references. Key national references included planning guidelines and convergence frameworks issued by Bappenas (2018; 2020; 2021), which outline multisectoral coordination requirements for nutrition-specific and nutrition-sensitive interventions. Supporting academic and policy literature was also reviewed to contextualize governance integration challenges (Agus et al., 2025; Kurniawan et al., 2025).

### **Data Collection Procedure**

Data collection involved systematic identification, selection, and categorization of policy documents relevant to planning integration and fiscal coordination. Documents were screened based on relevance to institutional governance, regulatory alignment, and budgeting mechanisms affecting stunting reduction programs. Extracted information was organized into thematic matrices to facilitate comparison across policy domains and institutional responsibilities.

### **Analytical Framework**

The analysis applied qualitative content analysis to interpret policy alignment and identify structural gaps. Policy alternatives were then evaluated using Bardach's comparative criteria—effectiveness, efficiency, administrative feasibility, and equity considerations (Bardach, 2012). This process enabled structured assessment of alternative policy instruments, including maintaining existing arrangements, issuing executive circulars, and establishing binding regional regulations.

### **Validity and Reliability**

To enhance analytical rigor, triangulation was conducted by cross-referencing findings across multiple policy documents and scholarly sources. Consistency checks were applied during coding and interpretation to ensure reliability in thematic categorization. This document-based triangulation strengthens credibility in qualitative policy research where empirical observation is not the primary data source.

## **Ethical Considerations**

This study relied exclusively on publicly available policy and scholarly documents and did not involve human participants or personal data collection. Therefore, ethical approval was not required. Nevertheless, proper citation and responsible use of policy sources were maintained throughout the research process to ensure academic integrity.

## **Results and Discussion**

### **Overview of Policy Integration Conditions**

The analysis of regional planning and policy documents indicates that stunting reduction initiatives in Gianyar Regency have been supported by multiple sectoral programs addressing health, sanitation, social welfare, and infrastructure development. These initiatives demonstrate alignment with national convergence strategies emphasizing the integration of nutrition-specific and nutrition-sensitive interventions (Bappenas, 2021). However, the findings reveal that program implementation largely remains sector-driven, with limited structural mechanisms ensuring systematic integration across agencies. As a result, coordination tends to rely on administrative communication rather than institutional mandates.

### **Regulatory Alignment Findings**

Document review shows that the absence of binding local regulations specifically mandating integration of stunting-related outcomes within planning and budgeting processes represents a major governance gap. Existing planning instruments incorporate stunting indicators as development priorities, yet they lack enforceable provisions requiring all local agencies to align their programs with measurable reduction targets. This condition reduces policy accountability and weakens cross-sectoral responsibility in addressing multidimensional determinants of stunting (Bappenas, 2020).

### **Planning and Budgeting Synchronization**

The results also indicate that development planning and fiscal allocation processes are not fully synchronized with convergence objectives. Budget structures remain predominantly input-oriented, emphasizing routine program implementation rather than outcome-based performance indicators linked to stunting reduction. Consequently, monitoring sectoral contributions toward target achievements becomes difficult, and resource allocation effectiveness cannot be clearly evaluated. This pattern reflects broader challenges in implementing performance-based budgeting frameworks at the regional level.

## **Institutional Coordination Patterns**

Analysis of institutional arrangements highlights fragmented coordination mechanisms among local government agencies. Although cross-sector meetings and coordination forums are conducted, they function primarily as consultative platforms rather than decision-binding structures. This limits their capacity to ensure program alignment, resulting in overlapping activities in some sectors and gaps in others. Weak integration of monitoring and evaluation systems further restricts evidence-based policy adjustment and performance tracking.

## **Comparative Assessment of Policy Alternatives**

Applying Bardach's analytical framework enabled comparison of three potential policy options. Maintaining existing arrangements was found to offer administrative convenience but limited improvement in integration effectiveness. Issuing executive circulars could strengthen coordination signals but lacks binding authority to enforce compliance across agencies. Establishing a formal regional regulation supported by periodic executive decrees emerged as the most effective alternative, demonstrating higher potential for strengthening accountability, ensuring planning alignment, and improving fiscal efficiency.

## **Policy Impact Projection**

The evaluation suggests that regulatory reinforcement would enhance multisectoral convergence by institutionalizing integration within planning and budgeting frameworks. Expected outcomes include improved resource allocation efficiency, clearer accountability mechanisms, and stronger monitoring of sectoral contributions to stunting reduction targets. This policy direction also aligns with national governance recommendations advocating structural integration as a foundation for sustainable human development outcomes.

The results of this policy analysis demonstrate that the core challenge in accelerating stunting reduction in Gianyar Regency is not the absence of intervention programs but the limited integration of specific and sensitive interventions into regional planning and budgeting frameworks. Development documents such as RPJMD, RKPD, and OPD strategic plans remain sector-based, which leads to fragmented implementation and weak accountability across sectors. This finding aligns with the argument that sectoral planning approaches hinder outcome-oriented governance and reduce policy effectiveness (Bappenas, 2018). Weak regulatory binding mechanisms further exacerbate this structural issue. Without explicit regional regulations requiring integration of stunting interventions into planning and budgeting documents, local government agencies lack formal obligations to align their programs with stunting reduction targets. This reflects institutional governance gaps rather than

implementation failure, as coordination alone cannot substitute for binding regulatory instruments (Utami et al., 2024).

Additionally, the perception of stunting as primarily a health-sector responsibility limits multisectoral engagement. Agencies responsible for sanitation, social welfare, and education often lack performance indicators linked to stunting outcomes, despite the importance of sensitive interventions in addressing nutritional determinants. Previous studies emphasize that cross-sector coordination is essential to ensure convergence in stunting reduction strategies (Mastina & Mitra, 2025). Another issue concerns inconsistencies between macro policy priorities and operational planning structures. Although stunting reduction is frequently stated as a regional development priority, the absence of mechanisms translating these priorities into operational programs and budgets results in policy fragmentation. This confirms findings that sector-oriented planning frameworks fail to align strategic priorities with implementation processes (Kurniawan et al., 2025). Budget governance problems also reduce policy effectiveness. Without tagging mechanisms and cross-sector indicators, expenditures related to stunting interventions cannot be systematically monitored or evaluated. As a result, public spending often continues based on routine budgeting practices rather than outcome-based performance targeting stunting reduction (Fauziah et al., 2025).

From a policy alternatives perspective, maintaining the status quo fails to address integration challenges. While it presents minimal political resistance, it perpetuates fragmented program execution and weak monitoring structures. Such conditions limit measurable contributions to stunting reduction outcomes and reinforce inefficiencies in development planning (Agus et al., 2025). The issuance of a mayoral circular letter offers moderate improvement by encouraging coordination among agencies, yet its limited legal authority restricts enforceability. Evidence suggests that administrative directives alone cannot ensure compliance or structural transformation in planning and budgeting practices, making their long-term impact uncertain (Frisman et al., 2024). Conversely, establishing binding regional regulations demonstrates higher effectiveness across policy criteria. Regulatory frameworks provide legal legitimacy that aligns planning and budgeting systems and supports convergence-based governance. This approach reflects policy analysis principles emphasizing institutional reform to achieve sustainable problem-solving outcomes (Bardach, 2012).

The social implications of such regulatory adoption are significant. Integrated service delivery across sectors such as health, sanitation, and social protection can enhance coverage for vulnerable populations and strengthen governance leadership. Research indicates that

nutrition-sensitive interventions significantly improve developmental outcomes when delivered in coordinated frameworks (De Hoop et al., 2025). Overall, this discussion highlights that effective stunting reduction requires institutional transformation rather than program expansion alone. Integrating planning, budgeting, and performance evaluation through binding regulatory instruments strengthens accountability and ensures that development spending contributes directly to human capital outcomes. Such integration aligns with national policy mandates emphasizing multisectoral convergence in stunting reduction strategies (Peraturan Presiden Republik Indonesia No. 72 Tahun 2021).

## **Conclusion**

This study concludes that the main challenge in accelerating stunting reduction in Gianyar Regency lies not in the absence of programs but in the limited institutional integration across planning and budgeting systems. Although multisectoral initiatives addressing health, sanitation, and social welfare have been implemented, their sector-based execution reduces overall effectiveness and accountability. Fragmented planning structures and routine-oriented budgeting practices weaken the collective impact of interventions, making it difficult to ensure measurable progress toward development targets. Strengthening alignment between policy priorities, institutional coordination, and fiscal allocation is therefore essential to improve governance outcomes and maximize the effectiveness of public interventions. The analysis further indicates that regulatory reinforcement provides the most strategic pathway for achieving sustainable convergence in stunting reduction efforts. Establishing binding integration mechanisms can enhance cross-sector accountability, improve resource efficiency, and support systematic monitoring of outcomes. Moving forward, regional policy development should emphasize institutionalized coordination, performance-oriented budgeting, and integrated monitoring systems to ensure long-term human development gains. Future research is encouraged to evaluate implementation impacts following policy reform and to explore innovative governance models that address complex multisectoral challenges.

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