

# SUN CSA INDONESIA SUPPORTING STUNTING PREVENTION EFFORTS IN THE COUNTRY

The Indonesian Ministry of Health identified stunting, reduction, and prevention among its top three priorities for 2018. In line with this, the Government of Indonesia (GOI) approved the National Strategy to Accelerate Stunting Prevention 2019-2024 (STRANAS), which aims to ensure that relevant stakeholders and sectors collaborate to achieve stunting prevention and reduction objectives in Indonesia.

## Role of SUN CSA Indonesia in Multi-Stakeholder Platforms

SUN CSA Indonesia works to coordinate and build the capacity of CSA members to contribute to multi-stakeholder and multi-sectoral nutrition action plans, and better mobilise domestic resources to finance stunting prevention activities. SUN CSA members engaged in nutrition planning processes for stunting prevention. In March to April 2021, SUN CSA provided a short-term technical assistance to review the current stunting prevention planning and implementation activities, identify challenges faced by CSA members in advocating nutrition specific and nutrition-sensitive interventions, and engage in local level stunting prevention meetings. Seventy members participated in focused group discussions (FGDs) to identify nutrition planning challenges and define alternatives and recommendations.

In June 2020 to May 2021, SUN CSA provided technical assistance for the development of the 2021-2025 National Action Plan for Food and Nutrition (RAN-PG). The RAN-PG has been developed and aligned with the Midterm National Development Plan 2020-2024, was synchronized with the stunting prevention movement, and served as a guide for the development of local Food and Nutrition Action Plans. RAN-PG has been disseminated to all 96 national and subnational CSA members.

The SUN Focal Point, Mr. Pungkas Bahjuri Ali, the Director of Health and Nutrition of National Planning Agency (BAPPENAS), provided support in coordinating the SUN Multi-Stakeholder Platform (MSP). He underlined that rights stakeholders have incentives to join the movement and commit to

nutrition interventions aligned with the national and district action plans. Nationally-aligned nutrition plans create a conducive environment for the adoption of optimal nutritional interventions on district and provincial levels. Behavioural change is fostered (new practices are adopted) on the household or community level.



*Mr. Pungkas, SUN Focal Point informing budget commitment on stunting prevention*

## MITRA Youth Program: Multinational collaboration to prevent anaemia in adolescent girls

The SUN CSA Coordinator, in partnership with the Governments of Indonesia, Australia, and Canada, concluded the Prevention of Anaemia in Adolescent Girls – MITRA Youth Program. Implemented in 10 districts in East Java and East Nusa Tenggara, the program reached over 400,000 adolescent girls annually, providing them with a weekly supply of iron and folic acid supplements (WIFAS) and nutrition education to prevent anaemia. The program was implemented from 2017 to 2020 in 5,859 high schools using a cross-sectoral and collaborative approach to strengthen the government's commitment towards adolescent nutrition and health.

Key result programs were recently shared with government representatives and officials from the Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Family Planning, Bappenas, development partners, academia, and the media. The MITRA Youth Program was also instrumental in reaching adolescents during the COVID-19 pandemic. With innovative approaches ranging - from securing

an advance supply of WIFAS to conducting home visits to distribute the supplements - the program successfully reached adolescents even when the schools were shut due to lockdowns.



Schoolgirls receiving WIFAS

Stunting prevention and reduction are public health priorities for Indonesia and adolescents' health is a crucial component of it. Thirty-two percent of adolescents in the country suffer from anaemia. One in four adolescent girls aged 15 years old and above are anaemic. Programs like MITRA Youth helped combat the high burden of anaemia and strengthen strategies and policies towards improving adolescent health. The program and its best practices need to be sustained and scaled up nationally, especially in provinces with high anaemia prevalence.

### Policy and budget advocacy

SUN CSA members advocated for better nutrition budget allocation, especially for stunting prevention, through deliberative stunting planning and budgeting at village, district, province, and national levels. As a result, the government committed to increase the health and nutrition budget from IDR 123.1 trillion in 2019 to IDR 132.2 trillion in 2020.

With strong support from the Ministry of Finance, a total of 35.7 trillion was allocated for stunting reduction in 2021. This budget is inclusive of both nutrition specific and nutrition-sensitive interventions. The program prioritizes the management of malnutrition through appropriate treatment regimes, Vitamin A and iron supplementation, fortification with iodized salt, deworming, noncash food assistance, and access to basic water and sanitation services. There is a plan for a geographically-focused implementation that initially targets 100 districts. From these interventions, Indonesia intends to improve the health and nutrition status of young children and adolescent, pregnant, and breastfeeding women to reduce stunting in the country.



Sun Focal Point, MoF Staff and Regional Development Director as resource person at the Special Allocation Grant Training

The campaign to increase the budget for nutrition was also supported by other SUN networks, donor and UN Agencies (DUNCNN), and the academe. Joint activities with these networks include the SUN Annual Meeting (SUNAM) and the reviewing and revising of several financial policies, legislations, and guidelines.

Despite these achievements, ensuring that “non-health” line ministries engage and commit sufficient budgets to improve the country’s nutritional status remain a challenge. SUN CSA, together with other SUN platforms, continue to advocate for increased budget allocation for nutrition specific and sensitive interventions, and to address alignment of line ministries with other ministries’ activity plan and budget to avoid redundancy. The CSA coordinator has strongly advocated for the steady production of fortified wheat flour and enforcement of stronger laws that guarantee the optimum nutrient value in fortified flour to address anaemia deficiency in the country. In February 2021, the Ministry of Industry (MoI) passed new legislation on mandatory wheat flour fortification based on new standards e.g. SNI 3751, to keep with WHO’s requirement to use a more bio-available type of iron for wheat flour fortification. This MoI regulation will provide a budget for implementation and monitoring of wheat flour fortification.

It is evident from all these experiences and lessons that SUN-CSA Indonesia’s strong coordination between the SUN Multi-Stakeholder Platform (MSP), particularly with the Government platform at central and local levels, is key to its success.