



Collaborative Capacity Organizations in Handling Stunting in Southwest Papua Province

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Abstract

Stunting remains a major public health challenge in Indonesia, particularly in Southwest Papua Province, where geographical constraints and institutional limitations hinder the implementation of integrated intervention programs. This study examines the organizational collaborative capacity of the Stunting Reduction Acceleration Team (TPPS) in Southwest Papua using Lai's Organizational Collaborative Capacity framework. A qualitative case study approach was employed. Data were collected through in-depth interviews, observations, and document analysis involving representatives from Bappeda, the Provincial Health Office, the Food Security Office, the Government Bureau, Posyandu cadres, community leaders, religious leaders, and non-governmental organizations. Data were analyzed using the interactive model of Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña. The findings indicate that while organizational dependency among stakeholders is strong, active participation remains uneven across institutions. Resource disparities, fragmented information exchange, and limited collaborative learning continue to constrain the effectiveness of cross-sector collaboration. The study also reveals that geographical isolation intensifies organizational dependency and creates additional barriers to integrated service delivery. These findings extend Lai's framework by highlighting the influence of geographical complexity on organizational collaborative capacity in decentralized public health governance. Strengthening institutional collaboration requires more equitable resource allocation, integrated information systems, continuous inter-organizational learning, and greater substantive participation among collaborative actors to improve the sustainability of stunting reduction programs.

Introduction

Stunting remains one of the most critical public health and development challenges in Indonesia because it affects children's physical growth, cognitive development, educational attainment, and future productivity. Despite the Indonesian government's commitment to reducing the national stunting prevalence to 14% through integrated intervention programs, disparities persist across regions, particularly in eastern Indonesia. Southwest Papua Province continues to experience one of the highest stunting prevalence rates in the country. According to the Ministry of Health (2024), approximately 31% of children in Southwest Papua suffer

from stunting, indicating that existing intervention programs have not yet achieved the expected outcomes (Khuzaimah et al., 2024; Untung et al., 2025). This condition suggests that reducing stunting is not merely a health issue but also reflects broader governance, institutional, and developmental challenges requiring coordinated public sector responses (Afandi et al., 2023; Sasmito et al., 2025).

The persistence of high stunting prevalence in Southwest Papua is influenced by multiple interconnected factors. Limited access to healthcare services, inadequate family nutrition knowledge, poverty, poor environmental sanitation, and insufficient public infrastructure collectively contribute to child malnutrition (De Schutter et al., 2023; Aidoo, 2023; Arize et al., 2023). These challenges are further exacerbated by the geographical characteristics of Southwest Papua, where many communities are located in remote coastal areas, small islands, and mountainous inland regions that are difficult to access. Such geographical constraints often limit the delivery of health services, nutrition programs, and government interventions, making effective policy implementation increasingly dependent on collaboration among multiple organizations rather than the capacity of a single institution.

Recognizing the multidimensional nature of stunting, the Indonesian government established the Stunting Reduction Acceleration Team (TPPS) as a cross-sectoral coordination mechanism involving regional government agencies, health institutions, community organizations, universities, and civil society. The TPPS is expected to integrate planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of stunting reduction programs across sectors so that interventions are implemented comprehensively rather than through fragmented institutional efforts. This collaborative approach reflects the growing recognition that complex public problems require integrated governance involving multiple actors with different responsibilities and resources (Hofstad et al., 2022; Afandi, et al., 2023; Klijn et al., 2025).

However, despite the establishment of TPPS, institutional collaboration in Southwest Papua has not functioned optimally. Field observations indicate that coordination among participating organizations remains weak, resulting in fragmented program implementation. Several government agencies continue to implement activities based primarily on their respective institutional mandates, leading to duplication of activities in some areas while leaving other priorities insufficiently addressed. Information exchange among organizations is also limited, reducing the effectiveness of planning and monitoring. Moreover, overlapping responsibilities, unclear role allocation, and differences in organizational priorities frequently hinder integrated decision-making. Resource disparities further complicate collaboration, as some agencies possess adequate financial resources, personnel, and infrastructure, whereas others experience significant operational constraints. Consequently, collaborative efforts often rely more on formal organizational structures than on effective inter-organizational interaction capable of producing integrated public services (Lægreid & Rykkja, 2022; Kanon, 2024; Mian et al., 2025).

Cross-sector collaboration has long been recognized as an effective governance approach for addressing complex public issues that cannot be solved by individual organizations. Agranoff & McGuire (2003) argue that collaborative public management enables organizations to combine resources, align objectives, and coordinate collective actions to address public problems more effectively. Accordingly, the success of collaboration depends not only on institutional arrangements but also on the organizational capacity to establish cooperative relationships, manage shared resources, and sustain collective commitment.

To examine these organizational dynamics, this study adopts the Organizational Collaborative Capacity framework proposed by Lai (2012). Lai conceptualizes collaborative capacity as an organization's ability to establish, maintain, and strengthen collaborative relationships to

achieve shared objectives. The framework emphasizes five interrelated dimensions: dependency, membership, resources, information, and learning that determine the effectiveness of inter-organizational collaboration. These dimensions are particularly relevant for analyzing stunting governance because successful intervention requires organizations to coordinate diverse resources, exchange information, distribute responsibilities, and continuously learn from collaborative experiences. Similar perspectives are presented by Foster-Fishman et al. (2001), who emphasize leadership, organizational commitment, and relationship building as essential components of collaborative capacity. Gray (1989) further argues that sustainable collaboration depends on organizations' ability to develop reciprocal relationships and positive interdependence. Likewise, Huxham & Vangen (2005), Provan & Milward (2001), Thomson & Perry (2006), Bryson et al. (2006), and Provan & Kenis (2008) consistently highlight that collaboration effectiveness is determined by communication quality, resource integration, governance mechanisms, network management, and the capacity to coordinate diverse organizational actors.

Previous studies in Indonesia have documented numerous challenges in collaborative stunting governance. Sari & Nurhidayah (2021) identified weaknesses in cross-sector communication and program synchronization in East Lombok Regency. Rahmawati et al. (2022) found that collaborative governance in Bone Regency was constrained by limited organizational resources and insufficient participation of non-government actors. Hidayat & Kurniawan (2023) reported that local government coordination in East Nusa Tenggara remained weak, particularly regarding data integration and inter-agency alignment. Similarly, Putri et al. (2022) demonstrated that institutional collaboration in West Sulawesi was largely administrative rather than based on genuine collaborative learning, while Yusuf & Mahmud (2023) emphasized that limited partnerships with local communities reduced the effectiveness of TPPS implementation in coastal regions.

Although these studies provide valuable insights into collaborative governance for stunting reduction, they primarily focus on coordination mechanisms, governance structures, or program implementation. Limited attention has been devoted to examining how organizational collaborative capacity itself is developed and exercised within cross-sector networks, particularly in geographically complex regions such as Southwest Papua. Furthermore, previous studies have rarely analyzed collaboration through the five organizational capacity dimensions proposed by Lai (2012), leaving important questions regarding organizational interdependence, membership quality, resource sharing, information exchange, and collaborative learning insufficiently explored. Addressing this gap is particularly important because the geographical isolation, infrastructural limitations, and socio-cultural diversity of Southwest Papua create collaborative challenges that differ substantially from those reported in other Indonesian provinces.

Therefore, this study aims to analyze the organizational collaborative capacity of the Stunting Reduction Acceleration Team (TPPS) in Southwest Papua Province using Lai (2012) Organizational Collaborative Capacity framework. By examining the dimensions of dependency, membership, resources, information, and learning, this research seeks to explain how organizational capacity influences the effectiveness of institutional collaboration in addressing stunting. The findings are expected to contribute not only to the development of collaborative governance literature but also to provide practical recommendations for strengthening cross-sector collaboration in geographically disadvantaged regions, thereby supporting more integrated and sustainable stunting reduction policies.

Method

Research Design

This study employed a qualitative research approach using a case study design to examine organizational collaborative capacity in institutional collaboration for stunting management in Southwest Papua Province. A qualitative approach was considered appropriate because the study sought to develop an in-depth understanding of how collaboration is established, implemented, and experienced by various stakeholders involved in the Stunting Reduction Acceleration Team (TPPS). Rather than measuring relationships quantitatively, the research explored organizational interactions, coordination mechanisms, communication patterns, resource sharing, and collaborative learning that shape the implementation of stunting reduction programs. According to Creswell (2014), qualitative research is particularly suitable for investigating social phenomena by understanding participants' perspectives, experiences, and interpretations within their natural settings.

The study adopted a case study strategy because collaborative governance within the TPPS represents a contemporary phenomenon embedded in a real-life organizational context. Southwest Papua Province provides a unique setting characterized by geographical fragmentation, dispersed coastal and inland communities, limited infrastructure, and unequal public service accessibility. These contextual characteristics create distinctive collaborative challenges that require intensive interaction among government institutions, community organizations, health workers, and non-governmental organizations. Yin (2018) argues that a case study approach is appropriate when researchers seek to investigate complex organizational processes within their actual context and where the boundaries between the phenomenon and its context are not clearly evident.

Research Setting and Participants

The research was conducted in Southwest Papua Province, Indonesia, where the provincial government has established the Stunting Reduction Acceleration Team (TPPS) to coordinate cross-sectoral efforts for reducing stunting prevalence. The TPPS serves as the primary collaborative platform that integrates multiple governmental and non-governmental actors responsible for health, nutrition, food security, sanitation, community empowerment, and social welfare programs.

Participants were selected using purposive sampling to ensure that all informants possessed substantial knowledge and direct experience regarding institutional collaboration in stunting management. Purposive sampling enabled the researcher to obtain rich and relevant information from individuals directly involved in collaborative decision-making and program implementation. The participants consisted of representatives from the Regional Development Planning Agency (Bappeda), the Provincial Health Office, the Food Security Office, the Provincial Government Bureau, health workers, village health cadres (Posyandu cadres), community leaders, religious leaders, and representatives of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) participating in stunting intervention programs. These participants were selected because they represented different organizational perspectives and played complementary roles within the collaborative governance network.

The selection of participants continued until information redundancy was achieved and no substantially new findings emerged from subsequent interviews, thereby ensuring adequate data saturation.

Data Collection

The study utilized both primary and secondary data sources to obtain a comprehensive understanding of collaborative organizational capacity.

Primary data were collected through in-depth semi-structured interviews, direct observation, and field documentation. Semi-structured interviews allowed participants to describe their experiences, perceptions, and organizational practices while enabling the researcher to explore emerging issues during the interview process. Interview questions focused on the five dimensions of Organizational Collaborative Capacity proposed by Lai (2012), namely dependency, membership, resources, information, and learning. Additional questions explored coordination mechanisms, organizational roles, challenges encountered during collaboration, and strategies adopted to overcome institutional barriers.

Direct observations were conducted during coordination meetings, public health activities, and community-based stunting intervention programs. Observation enabled the researcher to examine actual collaborative interactions among participating organizations and compare observed practices with participants' interview responses.

Secondary data were collected from official government documents, including TPPS annual reports, provincial stunting prevalence statistics, regional development planning documents, policy regulations, coordination meeting minutes, program evaluation reports, monitoring documents, and other administrative records relevant to collaborative governance and stunting reduction. The integration of multiple data sources strengthened the comprehensiveness of the research findings and facilitated data triangulation.

Data Analysis

Data analysis followed the interactive qualitative analysis model proposed by Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (2014), which consists of four interconnected processes: data condensation, data display, conclusion drawing, and verification. These analytical activities were conducted simultaneously throughout the research process rather than sequentially.

The analysis began with data condensation, during which interview transcripts, observation notes, and documentary evidence were carefully reviewed, coded, and categorized according to the dimensions of Organizational Collaborative Capacity developed by Lai (2012). Similar concepts and recurring patterns were grouped into thematic categories representing dependency, membership, resources, information, and learning.

Following the coding process, the categorized data were systematically organized into thematic matrices and narrative displays to facilitate comparison across different participants and organizations. Thematic analysis enabled the researcher to identify similarities, differences, and relationships among organizational experiences in implementing collaborative stunting management.

The final stage involved drawing conclusions through continuous interpretation and verification of the emerging themes. Conclusions were repeatedly compared with the original data sources to ensure consistency and to avoid premature interpretation. Throughout the analytical process, findings from interviews, observations, and documentary evidence were continuously cross-checked to strengthen the credibility of the interpretations.

Result and Discussion

The findings of this study describe the organizational collaborative capacity developed within the Stunting Reduction Acceleration Team (TPPS) in Southwest Papua Province. Data were obtained through in-depth interviews with representatives of the Regional Development

Planning Agency (Bappeda), the Provincial Health Office, the Provincial Food Security Office, the Provincial Government Bureau, Posyandu cadres, community leaders, religious leaders, and representatives of non-governmental organizations (NGOs). These informants were selected because they were directly involved in planning, coordinating, implementing, and monitoring stunting reduction programs.

The analysis is organized according to the five dimensions of Organizational Collaborative Capacity proposed by Lai (2012), namely dependency, membership, resources, information, and learning. Before presenting each dimension, Table 1 summarizes the main findings obtained from the different groups of informants and highlights their analytical meaning within the collaborative governance process.

Table 1. Data Reduction of Organizational Collaborative Capacity in Institutional Collaboration for Stunting Management in Southwest Papua Province

Collaborative Capacity	Government Actors	Community Actors	Non-Governmental Actors	Main Finding / Analytical Meaning
Dependency	Stunting programs require coordination among Bappeda, Health Office, Food Security Office, Government Bureau, and other OPDs. However, coordination remains fragmented.	Communities depend heavily on Posyandu cadres and health workers for nutrition services and information.	NGOs support government programs by reaching isolated communities that are difficult for public institutions to access.	High organizational interdependence exists, but coordination mechanisms and role integration remain weak.
Membership	TPPS formally includes multiple OPDs; however, participation varies considerably among institutions.	Community leaders and religious leaders participate mainly during socialization activities rather than strategic planning.	NGOs actively support implementation but have limited involvement in planning and evaluation.	Formal organizational membership is stronger than substantive participation in collaborative decision-making.
Resources	Budget allocations, personnel, transportation, and service	Remote communities continue to experience limited access	NGO activities depend largely on project-based funding and external support.	Unequal resource distribution limits the effectiveness of

	facilities differ substantially across agencies.	to health facilities and nutrition services.		collaborative implementation.
Information	Data sharing among OPDs remains inconsistent, resulting in differences in planning and monitoring.	Public understanding of stunting varies across districts and villages.	NGOs experience limited access to government information and planning documents.	Weak information integration reduces coordination effectiveness and delays interventions.
Learning	Program evaluation is conducted periodically, but inter-agency learning remains limited.	Health education has improved community awareness, although participation remains uneven.	NGOs contribute to community education but are rarely involved in institutional learning forums.	Collaborative learning has not yet become an institutionalized process across TPPS members.

Source: Field Data Analysis (2026)

Dependency in Organizational Collaborative Capacity

Dependency refers to the extent to which organizations rely on one another to accomplish common objectives. The findings demonstrate that no single organization possesses sufficient authority, resources, or expertise to independently address stunting in Southwest Papua Province. Instead, the implementation of stunting reduction programs depends on the coordinated contribution of multiple institutions with complementary responsibilities.

The Provincial Health Office is responsible for maternal and child health services, nutritional surveillance, growth monitoring, and clinical intervention. However, these responsibilities cannot be effectively implemented without continuous support from Posyandu cadres who collect anthropometric data at the village level, Bappeda which coordinates development planning and budgeting, the Food Security Office which implements food diversification and nutrition programs, and the Government Bureau which facilitates inter-agency coordination and policy implementation.

A representative from the Provincial Health Office explained:

"The Health Office cannot reduce stunting independently. Our intervention begins with data collected by Posyandu cadres. We also depend on Bappeda for integrated planning, the Food Security Office for nutrition support programs, and NGOs to help us reach communities that government services cannot easily access." (Head of Nutrition Division, Provincial Health Office)

Similarly, officials from Bappeda emphasized that integrated planning depends heavily on the contribution of information from all participating institutions.

"Bappeda coordinates the provincial action plan, but planning cannot be completed unless every OPD submits updated reports and implementation data. Collaboration is impossible if organizations work independently." (*Planning Division, Bappeda Southwest Papua*)

The findings also reveal strong operational dependency among organizations during field implementation. In many coastal villages, island communities, and remote inland areas, transportation limitations require several agencies to conduct joint service activities to reduce operational costs and maximize limited human resources.

An official from the Provincial Food Security Office explained:

"Several villages can only be reached by boat, while others require long land transportation. Whenever possible, nutrition programs are implemented together with health services because conducting separate activities would be inefficient." (*Food Security Office*)

The Government Bureau also acknowledged that organizational dependency has not yet been accompanied by effective coordination mechanisms.

"Every institution understands that collaboration is necessary. The problem is that coordination often depends on individual initiatives rather than institutional mechanisms. Some agencies continue implementing their own programs without synchronizing activities." (Provincial Government Bureau)

Community actors similarly emphasized their dependence on frontline health workers.

A Posyandu cadre stated:

"Families usually receive information from cadres first. We report children's growth to the Health Office, but if follow-up support from other agencies is delayed, many community problems cannot be solved immediately." (Posyandu Cadre)

NGO representatives described their complementary role in extending government services.

"Government officers cannot always visit isolated villages regularly because of transportation constraints. NGOs often facilitate communication with communities and assist health workers during outreach activities." (NGO Representative)

Overall, the findings indicate that organizational dependency within TPPS extends beyond administrative coordination and reflects functional interdependence among government institutions, community organizations, and civil society. The Health Office depends on village-level nutritional data collected by cadres; Bappeda depends on planning and implementation reports from sectoral agencies; the Food Security Office supports nutritional intervention through food security programs; NGOs facilitate access to geographically isolated communities; and community leaders encourage local participation in health activities.

However, although dependency among actors is relatively high, collaborative relationships remain constrained by fragmented coordination, inconsistent information exchange, and unclear operational responsibilities. Consequently, organizational dependency has not yet evolved into fully integrated collaborative governance capable of delivering coordinated and sustainable stunting interventions across Southwest Papua Province.

Membership in Organizational Collaborative Capacity

Membership represents the composition of organizations and stakeholders involved in collaborative governance as well as the quality of their participation in achieving shared objectives. The findings indicate that the Stunting Reduction Acceleration Team (TPPS) in

Southwest Papua Province formally consists of a broad network of government agencies, health workers, village health cadres (Posyandu cadres), community leaders, religious leaders, universities, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs). The establishment of this multi-actor structure reflects the government's recognition that stunting is a multidimensional issue requiring coordinated interventions across sectors rather than isolated organizational efforts.

According to Bappeda, the institutional structure of TPPS has been designed to ensure that each Regional Apparatus Organization (OPD) contributes according to its respective mandate. The Health Office is responsible for maternal and child health services, the Food Security Office focuses on food diversification and nutritional resilience, while Bappeda coordinates planning, budgeting, and inter-agency monitoring.

A representative from Bappeda explained:

"Formally, every relevant OPD is already part of the TPPS. Each institution has specific responsibilities that should complement one another because stunting cannot be solved by the health sector alone." (Planning Division, Bappeda Southwest Papua)

Despite this comprehensive institutional composition, the findings reveal a significant distinction between formal membership and active participation. Although almost all relevant institutions are formally represented within the TPPS structure, not all members consistently participate in collaborative planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation activities. Participation tends to vary according to each organization's institutional priorities, available resources, and perceived relevance of the agenda being discussed.

An official from the Provincial Government Bureau stated:

"Attendance at coordination meetings is generally good, but active participation is different. Some agencies only attend meetings because they are formally invited, while only a few consistently contribute ideas, coordinate programs, and follow up on agreed actions." (Provincial Government Bureau)

This finding indicates that organizational membership has largely fulfilled administrative requirements but has not yet developed into substantive collaboration characterized by continuous engagement and shared responsibility. Consequently, collaborative governance remains dependent on a limited number of highly active organizations.

Among all participating institutions, the Provincial Health Office plays the most dominant role because it directly implements maternal and child health services and maintains continuous interaction with communities through health centers and Posyandu activities.

A representative from the Provincial Health Office explained:

"Most field activities are coordinated by the Health Office because we have regular contact with health workers, Posyandu cadres, pregnant women, and families with young children. Other OPDs generally become involved according to their specific programs." (Provincial Health Office)

The dominance of the health sector has unintentionally shaped the perception among some organizations that stunting reduction is primarily the responsibility of the Health Office. As a consequence, several OPDs participate only when activities are directly associated with their own institutional performance indicators rather than considering stunting reduction as a collective development agenda.

An official from the Food Security Office acknowledged this condition:

"We fully support nutrition programs, but our involvement usually increases when food assistance or food diversification programs are discussed. Outside those activities, coordination is less intensive." (Provincial Food Security Office)

Similar patterns were identified among non-governmental actors. Community leaders and religious leaders participate actively in health promotion, public awareness campaigns, and community mobilization. However, they are rarely involved in strategic planning, budgeting discussions, or program evaluation.

A community leader explained:

"We are usually invited when there are community meetings or health campaigns, but we are seldom involved when the government prepares the program or evaluates the implementation." (Community Leader)

Likewise, a religious leader emphasized that community trust could significantly strengthen collaborative implementation if local leaders were involved more consistently.

"Religious leaders have close relationships with local communities. If we are involved from the beginning, health messages are generally accepted more easily because people already trust us." (Religious Leader)

The findings also demonstrate that NGOs contribute substantially during field implementation, particularly in geographically isolated coastal and island communities where government access remains limited. Nevertheless, NGO participation is generally concentrated on implementation activities rather than collaborative decision-making.

An NGO representative stated:

"We often assist government officers in community outreach and education, particularly in remote villages. However, we are rarely invited to participate in planning meetings where priorities and intervention strategies are determined." (NGO Representative)

Posyandu cadres also occupy a strategic position within the collaborative network because they serve as the primary link between government institutions and local communities. Besides monitoring children's nutritional status, cadres facilitate communication between households and health services, identify vulnerable families, and encourage community participation in health programs.

One Posyandu cadre explained:

"Our role is not only measuring children's growth. We also communicate family conditions to health workers and encourage parents to attend Posyandu activities. Without community participation, government programs are difficult to implement." (Posyandu Cadre)

Overall, the findings suggest that TPPS membership in Southwest Papua Province is institutionally comprehensive but operationally uneven. Formal organizational representation has successfully brought together government agencies, health workers, NGOs, community leaders, and religious leaders within a common institutional framework. However, active participation remains concentrated among a relatively small number of actors, particularly the Provincial Health Office, Bappeda, and Posyandu cadres. Other organizations tend to participate selectively according to their institutional mandates or project interests. Consequently, collaborative governance has developed more strongly as a formal

organizational arrangement than as a genuinely shared process characterized by equal participation, collective ownership, and continuous engagement among all TPPS members.

Resources in Organizational Collaborative Capacity

Resources constitute one of the most critical dimensions of organizational collaborative capacity because effective collaboration depends not only on organizational commitment but also on the availability and equitable distribution of financial resources, human resources, infrastructure, logistics, and operational support. The findings indicate that although the TPPS has mobilized resources from multiple institutions, considerable disparities remain among participating organizations, limiting the effectiveness of collaborative implementation across Southwest Papua Province.

Financial resources for stunting reduction are allocated through various Regional Apparatus Organizations (OPDs), each implementing sector-specific programs according to their institutional mandates. The Provincial Health Office manages maternal and child health services, nutritional supplementation, and growth monitoring, while the Food Security Office supports household food diversification and nutrition-sensitive interventions. Bappeda coordinates planning and budget integration to ensure that sectoral programs contribute to the provincial stunting reduction strategy.

A representative from Bappeda explained:

"Every OPD has its own budget allocation to support stunting reduction. The challenge is not only the availability of funding but also ensuring that these separate budgets complement one another rather than supporting isolated activities." (Planning Division, Bappeda Southwest Papua)

Despite these allocations, interview findings reveal considerable inequality in organizational resources. Agencies with larger operational budgets and stronger institutional capacity are able to implement activities more consistently, whereas smaller organizations frequently encounter financial and logistical limitations that reduce their contribution to collaborative programs.

An official from the Provincial Government Bureau stated:

"Some institutions have sufficient operational budgets, vehicles, and personnel to conduct field activities regularly. Others must wait for additional funding before implementing their programs. This creates differences in the intensity of program implementation." (Provincial Government Bureau)

Human resources also represent a major challenge. Participants consistently reported shortages of qualified health personnel, particularly in remote coastal, island, and mountainous communities. The limited number of nutrition officers, midwives, and public health workers frequently requires one officer to serve several villages simultaneously, reducing the frequency of monitoring and follow-up services for children at risk of stunting.

A representative from the Provincial Health Office explained:

"Several health workers are responsible for more than one village because personnel remain limited. Some locations can only be reached after several hours of travel by boat or by road, making routine monitoring extremely difficult." (Provincial Health Office)

This situation is reinforced by the experiences of Posyandu cadres, who often become the primary frontline actors responsible for monitoring children's nutritional status despite having limited equipment and operational support.

One Posyandu cadre stated:

"We regularly measure children's height and weight, but sometimes the equipment is incomplete, transportation is unavailable, and communication with health centers becomes difficult during bad weather." (Posyandu Cadre)

The geographical characteristics of Southwest Papua significantly intensify these resource challenges. Many villages are scattered across islands, coastal settlements, and mountainous areas with limited transportation infrastructure. Consequently, implementing routine health services requires considerably greater operational costs than in more accessible regions of Indonesia.

An official from the Provincial Food Security Office explained:

"Food distribution and nutrition programs become much more expensive in remote districts because transportation relies on boats or long-distance travel. In several villages, we combine activities with the Health Office to reduce operational costs." (Provincial Food Security Office)

NGO representatives similarly acknowledged that resource limitations affect their ability to support government programs consistently.

"Our activities depend largely on external project funding. When funding ends, community assistance also becomes limited even though local needs remain high." (NGO Representative)

Community leaders further emphasized that unequal access to public facilities influences the effectiveness of collaborative interventions.

"Some villages still experience difficulties accessing health services because transportation is limited and travel costs are high. Families cannot always visit health facilities regularly, especially during unfavorable weather conditions." (Community Leader)

These findings demonstrate that organizational resources extend beyond financial allocations to include human resources, transportation, communication facilities, medical equipment, and geographical accessibility. Although each institution contributes available resources, their unequal distribution creates significant disparities in organizational capacity and program implementation. Agencies with stronger financial and institutional capacity tend to dominate collaborative activities, whereas organizations with fewer resources participate less actively despite having important responsibilities.

Overall, the findings indicate that resource limitations remain one of the principal constraints affecting collaborative organizational capacity within the TPPS. Budget disparities, shortages of professional personnel, inadequate transportation facilities, limited operational infrastructure, and the geographical fragmentation of Southwest Papua collectively reduce the effectiveness of integrated stunting interventions. Nevertheless, collaborative resource sharing among government agencies, Posyandu cadres, NGOs, and community actors demonstrates that organizations continue to adapt by combining available resources to maintain service delivery in geographically challenging environments. These adaptive practices illustrate that collaborative capacity is sustained not only through formal institutional arrangements but also through the collective mobilization of limited resources to achieve shared public health objectives.

Organizational Interdependence and Unequal Participation in Collaborative Governance

The findings demonstrate that institutional collaboration in stunting management in Southwest Papua Province is characterized by a high degree of organizational interdependence. No single institution possesses sufficient authority, expertise, financial resources, or operational capacity to independently address the multidimensional causes of stunting. Consequently, government agencies, community organizations, health workers, NGOs, and local leaders become mutually dependent throughout planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation processes. The Provincial Health Office depends on Posyandu cadres to generate community-level nutritional data, while Bappeda relies on reports from sectoral agencies to formulate integrated development planning. Similarly, the Food Security Office contributes nutrition-sensitive interventions, and NGOs facilitate service delivery in geographically isolated communities where government access remains limited (Speich et al., 2023; Seay, 2025; Mustafa, 2025). These findings indicate that organizational dependency within TPPS extends beyond administrative coordination and reflects functional interdependence among actors with complementary responsibilities.

This finding supports Lai (2012) Organizational Collaborative Capacity framework, which argues that organizational dependency constitutes the foundation of collaborative capacity because organizations rarely possess sufficient internal resources to solve complex public problems independently. In the context of Southwest Papua, dependency is reinforced not only by organizational specialization but also by geographical conditions. The fragmented territorial characteristics of the province require organizations to combine logistical capacity, technical expertise, and community networks to ensure that services reach remote coastal, island, and mountainous communities. Consequently, dependency emerges as both an institutional necessity and a practical response to geographical challenges.

However, the findings also reveal that organizational dependency has not been accompanied by equal participation among collaborative members. Although TPPS formally involves numerous government agencies and non-governmental actors, active participation remains concentrated among a relatively small number of institutions, particularly the Provincial Health Office, Bappeda, and Posyandu cadres. Other organizations frequently participate according to their institutional mandates or specific program agendas rather than maintaining continuous engagement throughout the collaborative process. This distinction between formal organizational membership and substantive participation demonstrates that collaborative governance cannot be evaluated solely through institutional structures but must also consider the quality of organizational engagement.

The uneven participation identified in this study supports Foster-Fishman et al. (2001), who emphasize that collaborative capacity depends not only on organizational representation but also on leadership, shared commitment, and sustained interaction among members. Similarly, Gray (1989) argues that collaboration requires reciprocal relationships in which participating organizations recognize mutual dependence and collectively pursue common objectives. The findings suggest that while TPPS has successfully established an inclusive institutional structure, collaboration remains dominated by a limited number of organizations, reducing opportunities for collective ownership and shared accountability. This imbalance indicates that strengthening collaborative governance requires enhancing meaningful participation across all organizational members rather than merely expanding formal institutional representation.

An important contribution of this study is the identification of geographical context as a factor shaping organizational interdependence and participation. Unlike previous studies conducted in relatively accessible regions, institutional collaboration in Southwest Papua is influenced by dispersed settlements, transportation constraints, and uneven accessibility, which intensify

organizational dependency while simultaneously limiting opportunities for sustained interaction among collaborative actors. This finding extends Lai's (2012) framework by demonstrating that geographical complexity significantly influences the development of organizational collaborative capacity.

Resource and Information Inequality as Barriers to Collaborative Capacity

Another significant finding concerns the unequal distribution of organizational resources and the fragmentation of information management within the TPPS. Although multiple organizations contribute financial resources, personnel, infrastructure, and technical expertise, considerable disparities remain in their respective capacities to implement collaborative activities. Organizations possessing stronger institutional resources conduct field activities more consistently, whereas agencies with limited operational budgets and personnel often participate less intensively despite having formal responsibilities within the collaborative network.

These findings reinforce Lai (2012) argument that collaborative capacity depends on organizations' ability to mobilize and integrate complementary resources. However, the Southwest Papua case demonstrates that collaboration is influenced not only by resource availability but also by the unequal distribution of organizational capacity. The province's geographical characteristics substantially increase operational costs associated with transportation, supervision, and service delivery, thereby creating additional constraints for organizations operating with limited financial and human resources. Consequently, collaborative effectiveness is determined not merely by the total quantity of available resources but also by the equity with which these resources are distributed among participating organizations.

The findings also reveal that information exchange among collaborative actors remains fragmented. Differences in reporting systems, delays in data submission, and limited interoperability among sectoral information systems frequently result in inconsistent planning and implementation. Several organizations continue to maintain separate administrative databases according to institutional requirements, reducing opportunities for integrated decision-making and coordinated interventions. Such fragmentation contributes to inconsistencies in beneficiary identification, duplication of activities, and delayed implementation of nutrition interventions (Biks et al., 2025).

These findings are consistent with Thomson & Perry (2006), who argue that collaborative governance requires effective administrative coordination supported by transparent communication and shared information systems. Likewise, Provan & Milward (2001) emphasize that network effectiveness depends on organizations' ability to coordinate information across institutional boundaries. The Southwest Papua case demonstrates that fragmented information systems reduce organizational trust, limit evidence-based planning, and weaken accountability across collaborative networks.

Unlike previous studies that primarily identify resource shortages and administrative coordination as isolated problems, this study demonstrates that resource inequality and information fragmentation interact to produce cumulative barriers to collaboration. Limited organizational capacity reduces opportunities for information sharing, while fragmented information systems hinder the efficient allocation of scarce resources. These mutually reinforcing constraints weaken organizational collaborative capacity and reduce the effectiveness of integrated stunting interventions.

Toward Sustainable Organizational Collaborative Capacity

The findings further indicate that although TPPS has implemented routine coordination meetings, program evaluations, community education, and capacity-building activities, collaborative learning has not yet become an institutionalized organizational practice. Learning activities continue to be conducted primarily within individual organizations rather than across the collaborative network. Consequently, successful practices, operational innovations, and implementation experiences are not systematically documented or disseminated among participating institutions.

According to Lai (2012), collaborative learning enables organizations to continuously improve collaborative performance by exchanging knowledge, adapting to changing environments, and strengthening inter-organizational relationships. The absence of structured learning mechanisms therefore limits the long-term sustainability of collaborative governance because organizations repeatedly encounter similar implementation challenges without collectively developing adaptive solutions.

These findings are also consistent with Huxham & Vangen (2005), who argue that collaborative advantage emerges when organizations establish continuous communication, shared problem-solving mechanisms, and mutual learning processes. Similarly, Bryson et al. (2006) emphasize that sustainable cross-sector collaboration requires governance arrangements that encourage continuous organizational adaptation rather than relying solely on formal coordination structures. In Southwest Papua, collaborative learning remains constrained by limited documentation, irregular knowledge-sharing forums, differences in organizational capacity, and the absence of integrated mechanisms for disseminating lessons learned across TPPS members.

The findings suggest that strengthening organizational collaborative capacity requires moving beyond administrative coordination toward a learning-oriented collaborative culture. Establishing regular inter-agency reflection forums, integrating digital knowledge-management systems, standardizing collaborative documentation, and involving community organizations and non-governmental actors in evaluation processes would facilitate continuous organizational learning and strengthen adaptive governance. Such initiatives would enable TPPS members to transform individual organizational experiences into collective institutional knowledge that supports more effective and sustainable stunting reduction strategies.

This study contributes to the collaborative governance literature by demonstrating that organizational collaborative capacity in geographically disadvantaged regions is influenced not only by organizational dependency, membership, resources, information, and learning, but also by the interaction between these dimensions within a context characterized by geographical isolation, unequal institutional capacity, and fragmented public service delivery. The Southwest Papua case therefore extends Lai (2012) Organizational Collaborative Capacity framework by highlighting the importance of contextual factors in shaping collaborative effectiveness. These findings provide practical implications for policymakers seeking to strengthen institutional collaboration for stunting reduction, particularly in regions facing similar geographical and organizational challenges.

Conclusion

This study demonstrates that the organizational collaborative capacity of the Stunting Reduction Acceleration Team (TPPS) in Southwest Papua Province has been established through cross-sector collaboration involving government agencies, community actors, and non-governmental organizations; however, its effectiveness remains constrained by several

organizational challenges. While high interdependence among actors reflects the necessity of collaboration in addressing the multidimensional nature of stunting, active participation remains uneven across institutions, with collaboration still dominated by a limited number of organizations. Furthermore, disparities in financial, human, and infrastructural resources, fragmented information exchange, and the absence of institutionalized collaborative learning continue to hinder the implementation of integrated stunting interventions, particularly in geographically isolated areas. Organizational Collaborative Capacity framework by demonstrating that geographical complexity and unequal organizational capacity significantly shape collaborative effectiveness in decentralized public health governance. Therefore, strengthening institutional collaboration requires not only formal coordination mechanisms but also more equitable resource allocation, integrated information systems, continuous inter-organizational learning, and greater substantive participation from all collaborative actors. Such improvements are essential for developing sustainable collaborative governance capable of accelerating stunting reduction in Southwest Papua and other regions facing similar geographical and institutional challenges.

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