

STRENGTHENING MATERNAL AND CHILD HEALTH SYSTEM TOWARDS *INDONESIA EMAS 2045*

Menguatkan Sistem Kesehatan Maternal dan Anak Menuju Indonesia Emas 2045

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Abstract

This editorial article highlights the important role of strengthening the maternal and child health system for the overall increase of the nation's productivity, as well as the achievement of Indonesia Emas 2045. The discussion emphasized accessibility of maternal health services in community health services like *Posyandu* through readiness of health cadres, especially after the government implemented Integrated Primary Health Services or *Integrasi Layanan Primer* (ILP). Moreover, the implementation of exclusive breastfeeding was found to be significantly associated with stunting, making it a pivotal program to decrease stunting prevalence and increase infants' health quality. Although some challenges like geographic barriers, limitation of knowledge and education, as well as low household income existed, investing in the maternal and child health system would solve the problem of the high mortality rate among mothers and infants. As *Indonesia Emas 2045* was set as national development goals, the article stands up for better quality of maternal and child health in Indonesia through collaboration across sectors with an inclusive decision-making process.

Keywords: Child health, health system, infant health, maternal health.

The Indonesian Journal of Health Administration Volume 13 No.1 (2025) has been published. Among various topics covered in current edition, we can emphasize significant results of several studies to strengthen Indonesia's maternal and child health system.

Maternal health focuses on the health of women during pregnancy, childbirth, and postpartum period. Both maternal health and child health systems are among the most important blocks of health system as whole, given its noteworthy impact on families' well-being and nation's productivity.

The Ministry of Health compiled the Public Health Development Index (PHDI), a composite index including 30 public health indicators including maternal health and infant & child health. With the provincial scores varies between western and eastern part of Indonesia, the efforts to provide equal accessibility to health services across the nation is fundamental (Suparmi *et al.*, 2018)

Moreover, Indonesia's Ministry of Health has launched health transformation initiatives, including Integrated Primary Health Services (*Integrasi Layanan Primer*/ILP), which also affects maternal health services. The new integrated services come with consequence: health cadres in *Posyandu*, or community-based health services should be ready for providing sustainable programs and services.

A study from Siswati *et al.* (2025) highlighted how health cadres in *Posyandu* demonstrated high readiness to implement ILP. However, logistics and literacy improvement were needed to enhance cadres' skills in providing health services such as immunization, infant and child feeding, and so on. Ensuring quality of community health services is a solution to elevate preventive and promotive maternal health initiatives.

Aside from securing the accessibility of community health services, Indonesia also deals with other health problems like

stunting. Prior study using Indonesia Nutritional Status Monitoring Survey from 2017 showed the national proportion of stunted children in Indonesia reached 20.1% (Laksono *et al.*, 2022), while Ministry of Health stated 27.67% of stunting prevalence in 2019 (Badan Pusat Statistik, 2019). Stunting is closely related to maternal health issues, making it impossible to build solutions without considering both perspectives.

Bancin *et al.* (2025) examined the relationship between Exclusive Breastfeeding (EBF) and stunting. Conducting systematic literature review, the study found that EBF and stunting had statistically significant relationship, that children who did not receive EBF were more likely to experience stunting. Nevertheless, the study also explained how stunting in Indonesia was influenced by various determinants such as low household income, limited maternal education, even cultural beliefs intensified the complexity of stunting problem.

In Papua, the prevalence of exclusive breastfeeding was only 26.8%. Align with Bancin *et al.* (2025), Latifah *et al.* (2025) mentioned that the challenges of EBF practice in Papua included shortage of health workers and low participation of pregnant women due to geographic barriers. The study primarily aimed to examine the role of prenatal classes to EBF practice in Papua.

Using secondary data from the Indonesian Nutritional Survey (INS) 2021, Latifah *et al.* (2025) found that the implementation of prenatal classes was statistically associated with EBF. Other predisposing factors related to EBF in Papua were higher level of education and employment, being married, and living in rural areas.

Addressing maternal health issues as our priority can positively impact productivity, potential economic role of women, and reduce gender disparities (Barborra, 2023). By promoting maternal health, women can access adequate health services which will lower the risk of maternal mortality and increase women productivity and participation in workforce. This will consequently lead to increased

overall productivity and economic growth (Barborra, 2023).

The investment of health in early years of life, from prenatal to five years old have greater return on investment (Stephenson, 2024). Although further research needed to determine which stage of early life will bring lead to greater return, it is safe to say that maternal and child health initiatives would be significant investment for a nation's productivity. Multi-sectoral collaboration and inclusive decision making are keys to strengthen maternal and child health system, considering the predisposing factors like geographic and demographic barriers which would not be solved only by taking in health perspectives as solution.

Indonesia plans an ambitious target of *Indonesia Emas 2045*, falling across percapita income, reduction of poverty, increase of international leadership, growth of human capital competitiveness, and reduction of Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions. The increase of maternal and child health quality would be a notable factor of achieving *Indonesia Emas 2045*. Like a proverb says: great women deliver a great nation.

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