

## TACKLING THE LIFE COURSE OF UNDERNUTRITION THROUGH A FAMILY APPROACH

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**Undernutrition continues to be an important public health problem** and to contribute largely to **high mortality rates** among children, also **hindering the economic and social development** of communities. Children under five are the main target of undernutrition. Unicef and other partners have designed protocols for the management of acute malnutrition without complication at community level. There is also a protocol for the management of severe acute malnutrition with complications in hospitals. The implementation of these **protocols** has significantly **reduced the mortality associated with these forms of acute malnutrition**, but it has its limits. There are still major challenges to be met.

Among these challenges is the **improvement in the quality of care** for severely malnourished children in hospital, especially in terms of reducing and eliminating nosocomial diseases.

The second challenge is **to reduce the cost of care**. Every day in hospitals, we witness situations where parents ask to dismiss their children after only one week of hospitalization because they cannot afford continuing payments for the treatment. However, it takes at least eight weeks for children to be cured of SAM. Reducing the cost of care is therefore essential, **for example by combining ready-to-use therapeutic food with local food**.

The third challenge is **to avoid relapse**. Relapses are frequent, especially in these children suffering from SAM and hospitalized.

The fourth challenge is to **find case management strategies that both ensure efficiency and reduce management costs**, including indirect costs.

Through this panel, we will have presentations which will go in this direction and which will prolong reflection on the quality of the care given to these children, and especially the cost of this care.