

FROM WORRY TO WELLNESS

Yemen is currently facing one of the worst humanitarian crises in the world, with ongoing conflict and economic struggles exacerbating the situation. Malnutrition is a significant concern, especially for children under the age of five and Pregnant and Lactating Women (PLW). According to the World Food Programme (WFP), an estimated 2.3 million children under five and 1.1 million PLWs in Yemen are acutely malnourished. The crisis has left many families struggling to access basic nutritional needs, with devastating consequences.

In Mawiyah district, the economic struggles of its inhabitants worsened the already low level of awareness and severely affected the nutritional status of the people. The suspension of the preventive program only added to the worries and frustrations of the mothers who relied on it to keep their children healthy. As one of the community health volunteers expressed,

“We knew that this suspension would have many negative consequences.”

The situation in Mawiyah district is a stark reminder of the challenges faced by Yemenis and the need for continued support to alleviate their suffering.



However, hope was restored when YFCA finally resumed the preventive program after three long months of interruption in April 2023. The Community Health Volunteers (CHVs) worked tirelessly to screen and inform the beneficiaries about the resumption of the program and the distribution schedule. They ensured that all beneficiaries were present at the distribution points on the day of distribution, leaving no case of malnutrition undetected. The volunteers' efforts paid off, with 21,213 cases screened, 55 cases of severe acute malnutrition, and 484 cases of moderate acute malnutrition referred to health facilities.

The impact of their work was felt by many, including 15-month-old Dina Hisham Hassan Saeed from the village of Al-Qarn, who was on the brink of developing moderate acute malnutrition. Dina's mother stated, overwhelmed with worry

“I felt helpless seeing my daughter suffering”

After receiving the preventive nutritional supplies and her mother receiving the necessary education on good nutritional practices, Dina's condition improved within two months. Similarly, the case of Orhan Bashir Abdulmalik Saeed from the village of Al-Musayni'a showed a significant improvement in his mid-upper arm circumference since the program resumed.



The CHV faced challenges in changing the wrong behavioral habits practiced by the mothers in these areas, but they remained determined to raise awareness and cause a positive change. They walked for hours in some cases to reach beneficiaries in isolated villages and districts, never once faltering in their commitment to their humanitarian duty. As one of the volunteers said,

“ Helping people, especially children and pregnant and lactating women, is a humanitarian duty that we must all take seriously ”

The collaboration between YFCA and WFP in implementing the Promotion of Preventive and Lifesaving Nutrition Interventions since 2017 has been instrumental in reducing the number of moderate malnutrition cases and alleviating the suffering of the area's inhabitants. The volunteers' work is a testament to the power of humanitarian efforts to bring positive change to communities in need.

