

MAQEET'S STORY: OVERCOMING MALNUTRITION



The Entrance of Maqee't's house

The ongoing conflict in Yemen has had devastating effects on families across the country, making it increasingly difficult for parents to provide for their children and meet their basic needs. Maqee't's family is one such example, with both him and his older brother suffering from malnutrition. Maqee't is just three years old and lives with his family in Bait Al Madhany village in the Al Rujem district of Al Mahwit governorate. His family consists of ten members! including his parents, older brother, two sisters, and four relatives. The father used to work in the military, but since the start of the conflict, he has been without a job.

“At first, I didn't know what I can do to feed my children, so we had to leave the city and move to the village where I started working in farming and livestock. Maqee't's father sadly said”

Despite his best efforts, however, the family's income was not sufficient to provide for a diverse and healthy diet, and both Maqee't's older brother and younger brother suffered from malnutrition. This is a common experience for families across Yemen, where the ongoing conflict has made it increasingly difficult to meet basic needs.

One day in January 2023, a health worker named Hana Al Hamdani visited Maqee't's family as part of her efforts to help malnourished children in the community. She immediately noticed that something was wrong with Maqee't.

“Maqee't is an active child; I have never seen him this sluggish. He looked so tired as if life was drained out of his skinny body, so I immediately took his MUAC measurement, and it indicated moderate malnutrition. Hana said

Hana referred Maqee't to the Bani Asa'ad health center, where YFCA, in collaboration with WFP, is implementing a promotion of preventive and life-saving nutrition intervention.

“I couldn't sleep that night knowing that my second son is suffering from malnutrition, while we still trying to treat my older son from severe malnutrition, my younger son was detected with moderate malnutrition, I felt like I was incapable of taking care of my children's health. Maqee't's Mother Said in tears.





Before the intervention



After the intervention

At the health facility, Maqeeet was admitted to the TSFP program and began receiving supplementary foods to address his malnutrition. Hana also recognized that there was a major defect in the family's diet, with Maqeeet's mother having been detected as malnourished in 2019 while pregnant with Maqeeet, and his older brother still receiving treatment for severe malnutrition. To address this, Hana provided the mother with education on good nutrition and care practices, including affordable healthy foods that could be easily obtained.

“ I used to think that eating healthy food requires a lot of money, but thanks to Dr. Hana, I found out that we don't need to buy much. We just milked our sheep and bake our wheat. ”
Maqeeet's mother shared her experience.

This highlights the importance of education and awareness-raising in addressing malnutrition, as families may not always be aware of simple and affordable ways to access nutritious food.

Over the course of five months, Maqeeet received the support he needed to overcome malnutrition and was finally discharged from the TSFP program with a MUAC of 12.7 and a Z score under -1. The family was relieved that not only had their son regained his health, but they had also learned how to protect their children from malnutrition with affordable supplies.

This story is just one example of the impact that YFCA and WFP are having in Yemen, providing critical nutrition interventions and education to families in need. Despite the ongoing conflict and challenges faced by communities across the country, there are still people and organizations working tirelessly to make a positive impact and improve the lives of those in need. YFCA's comprehensive approach to nutrition, which includes medical treatment, education, and awareness-raising, is making a real difference in the lives of children like Maqeeet, helping them to overcome malnutrition and reach their full potential.