WHEN CONFLICTS BREAK OUT OR EMERGENCY STRIKES
it’s young children who are often hit hardest. Over the years, our teams on the ground have seen it too often: children from six months to five years old dying, or on the brink of death because of severe acute malnutrition. Without immediate treatment, including the vital nutrients they need to survive, their immune systems can’t fight off everyday ailments. Even a common cold or a bout of diarrhea can kill.

Malnourished kids, they don’t smile, they don’t play, they just sit still—they’re not really kids anymore. You know that they’re out of the woods the day you walk in and they smile. It’s amazing seeing that.

—KERSTIN HANSON, DOCTORS WITHOUT BORDERS NUTRITION ADVISOR AND PEDIATRICIAN

INDEPENDENT, NEUTRAL, IMPARTIAL EMERGENCY MEDICAL HUMANITARIAN AID

Doctors Without Borders: TREATING MALNOURISHED CHILDREN

NIGERIA 2016 © Benoît Finck/MSF
PIONEERING MALNUTRITION TREATMENT TO SAVE CHILDREN’S LIVES

We know that rapid diagnosis and treatment can mean the difference between life and death for millions of children. In the wake of crisis, our teams act fast, often using a simple upper arm measurement to screen for malnutrition. Our treatment is as quick and effective as diagnosis: we use and distribute ready-to-use therapeutic food (RUTF)—a small foil package containing an energy-dense meal.

RUTF provides all the proteins, essential fats, vitamins, and minerals that children trapped in crisis desperately need to reverse deficiencies and gain weight. As they don’t require any special preparation, these nutritional products allow patients who are not suffering from severe complications to be treated at home.

In situations where malnutrition is likely to become severe, our teams distribute nutritional supplements to at-risk children to prevent their condition from deteriorating.

LEARN MORE
about how we’re pioneering malnutrition treatment: doctorswithoutborders.org

Malnutrition accounts for nearly half of all deaths of children under five worldwide.*

3 million young lives are lost each year, making malnutrition the single greatest threat to child survival.*

In 2017, we treated 224,000 malnourished children.

Malnutrition accounts for nearly half of all deaths of children under five worldwide.*

3 million young lives are lost each year, making malnutrition the single greatest threat to child survival.*

In 2015, we treated 181,600 malnourished children.

* According to UNICEF

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Awarded the 1999 Nobel Peace Prize

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