

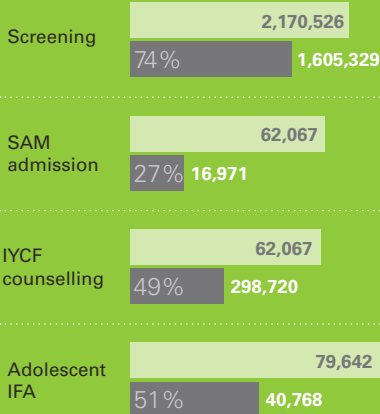


# Malawi Nutrition Cluster Updates

## Nutrition Response Progress

June 2023

Vol.3



## CMAM Programme Performance

SAM Children 6-59 months (May 2023)

Cure rate

92.6%

Death rate

1.7%

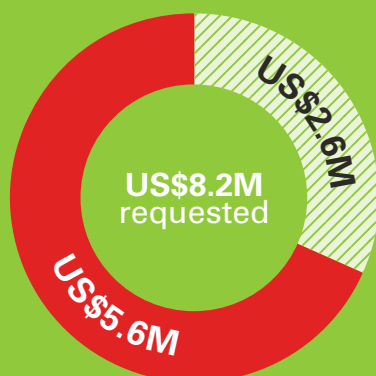
Default rate

4.1%

Non-responder

1.5%

## Funding status

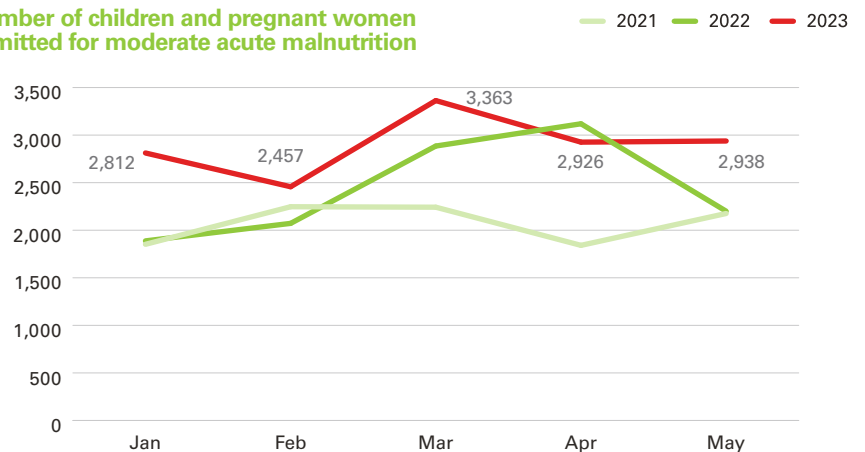


- Funding gap
- ▨ Funding available

## Key Highlights

- In May, 2,883 children under five years were admitted for treatment of severe acute malnutrition (SAM). In the same month, 2,432 children and 506 pregnant and lactating women were admitted as having moderate acute malnutrition (MAM).
- Through the Back-to-School campaign, 4,931 children in 62 Community Based Childcare Centres (CBCCs) benefitted from 98 ECD kits which include various playing and learning materials promoting early stimulation and learning for the children.
- In June, 3,977 adolescent girls 10-19 years old were supplemented with iron folic acid tablets in two districts (Machinga and Blantyre). The adolescent girls also received counseling on dietary diversification and consumption of iron rich foods to reduce their susceptibility to anemia.
- In June, 832,488 children under five were screened in 11 districts and 12,491 children (1.5%) were identified to be malnourished and referred to health facilities for further treatment (1,936 children with SAM and 10,555 children with MAM).

Number of children and pregnant women admitted for moderate acute malnutrition



Compared to the trends in 2021 and 2022, MAM admissions in 2023 remains high

## Challenges

- Limited partners supporting the supplementary feeding programme for MAM
- Capacity gap on treatment of children with cholera and severe acute malnutrition among health workers in cholera treatment units



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Mr. Ernest and his family in their back yard garden  
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**“Akule ndiThanzi is strengthening the ability of rural households to adopt optimal nutrition and hygiene practices for them to have greater access to safe water, improved sanitation, and nutritious food that will result in healthy and thriving children, adolescents, and pregnant women.”**

**McHenry Makwelero**

Acting Chief of Party and Feed the Children Country Representative

## Transforming Lives and Nourishing Communities: USAID’s Akule ndiThanzi Project Empowering Families with Nutritional Security

By Steve Mbayeni (Communication and Liaison Officer, Feed the Children)

Ernest Jickson, a husband and father of four, is one of the beneficiaries of the USAID-supported Akule ndiThanzi nutritional-sensitive agricultural interventions in Group Village Head Kalozero, Traditional Authority Mazengera in Lilongwe district.

Akule ndiThanzi, translated as ‘Let Them Grow Healthy’, is a five-year public-private partnership between USAID, Feed the Children, Nu Skin, and Procter & Gamble. The project uses a multisectoral nutrition programming approach to improve the health and nutrition status of women and children with an emphasis on the first 1000 days of a child’s life, from conception through the first two years.

Akule ndi Thanzi is implementing several interventions, including nutrition-sensitive agriculture through backyard gardens, small livestock production, Orange Fleshed Sweet Potatoes (OFSP) cultivation, groundnuts, and cooking demonstrations.

Additionally, the project has nutrition-specific interventions such as community-led feeding sessions (Thanzi sessions), support of Community Based Care Centres (CBCC) with VitaMeal, Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH), maternal nutrition, and reproductive health.

For many years, Ernest battled to make ends meet, which prolonged the household’s food

insecurity and contributed to the ongoing decline in his children’s health and nutritional status. He could not afford nutritious foods, such that his last-born biological child, 10-year-old Gift, succumbed to severe malnutrition and anemia. Fortunately, he was treated at Matapila Health Clinic in Lilongwe and survived.

“I do not want what happened to my son to repeat on my stepdaughter, who is less than a year old,” Ernest explains.

Ernest’s household is among the 5,000 household beneficiaries of Akule ndi Thanzi project identified in Salima, Lilongwe and Dowa districts. The 5,000 households which included families with underfive children, pregnant and lactating women were trained in backyard gardening and composite manure. They also received eight species of vegetable seeds namely Spinach, rape, Chinese, Mustard, amaranthus, blackjack, okra and carrots to grow in their backyard gardens and improve food diversity.

Ernest, the subsistence farmer, managed to set up his backyard garden with Lead Farmers’ support, and he can now reap tremendous results.

“I started backyard gardening through the Akule ndi Thanzi project. I am happy I made the right decision, as I am now reaping the rewards,” says Ernest.

“In the past, things were complicated. We were struggling to make ends meet, and often we could sleep on empty stomachs. On better days, we could only afford not more than two meals a day.”

Ernest’s determination to lift his family from starvation and poverty succeeded. He can now harvest enough for his family from his backyard garden and sell the surplus to buy what he cannot grow, including meat.

Seeing that most of his friends were going through the same challenges, Ernest is also sharing whatever he harvests from his garden, but more importantly, he is encouraging them to adopt backyard gardening. Several friends who have emulated him so far have also started reaping the rewards from their backyard gardens.

Jabesi Kambani doubles as the lead farmer and a chief in Neva village, in Group Village head Kalozero, where Ernest and his friends come from.

“I can say that there has been a significant improvement in the lives of families under my supervision. Before, several families could not access a variety of vegetables to improve their diet and nutrition, but now the situation has changed for the better,” says Jabesi.

## Cyclone Affected Districts Conduct Nutrition Mass Screening

In June, 12 cyclone Freddy-affected districts conducted mass nutrition screening to scale up the early identification and treatment of children with Severe Acute Malnutrition (SAM). Based on the data reported from six districts (Balaka, Blantyre, Chikwawa, Chiradzulu, Mangochi and Thyolo), this has enabled the screening for acute malnutrition of 779,944 children under five (369,914 males and 410,030 females). In the six districts, a total of 11,684 children were found to be malnourished and subsequently referred to the nearest health facilities for further assessment, possible treatment and infant and young child feeding counselling. Of the referred group, 1,727 children (869 males and 858 females) were diagnosed with SAM, representing 0.2%, while 9,957 children (4,582 males and 5,375 females) had MAM, representing 1.3% of those screened.

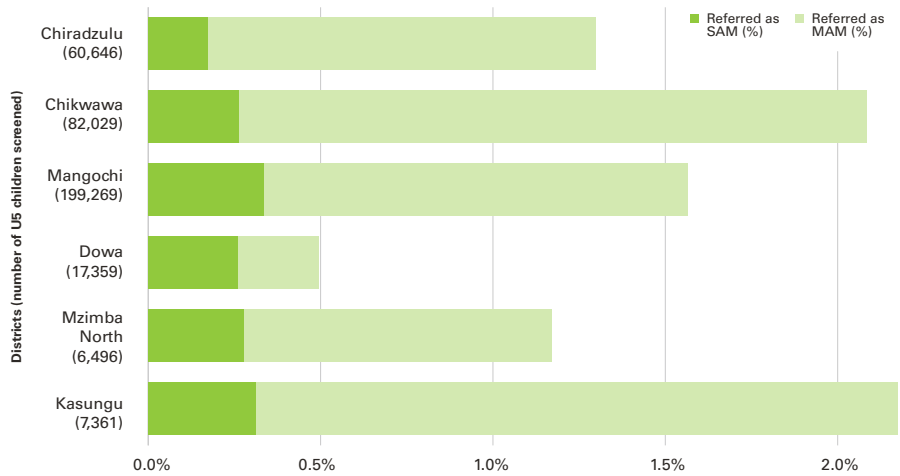
Mass screening strengthened the continued efforts of nutrition screening integrated in care group activities and growth monitoring sessions in all districts. Overall, 1,605,329 children under five (747,973 males and 857,356 females) have been screened since January 2023, representing 74% of the target 2,170,526. As of June 2023, a total of 4,086 children (0.3%) were referred as SAM and 16,491 children (1.0%) as MAM.

To ensure the quality of care for children admitted to the community-based acute malnutrition (CMAM) program, a total of 584 health workers in five districts (Chikwawa, Blantyre, Thyolo, Mwanza and Phalombe) were trained on SAM management in the context of cholera outbreak. Health workers including CMAM focal points, pharmacists, data clerks, facility in charges, nurses, and clinicians, enhanced skills in SAM treatment, reporting, and supplies management. Lilongwe, Salima, Thyolo and Mwanza districts are planning capacity strengthening in the upcoming weeks.



Mass screening in TA Kapeni, Blantyre district © UNICEF Malawi/2023

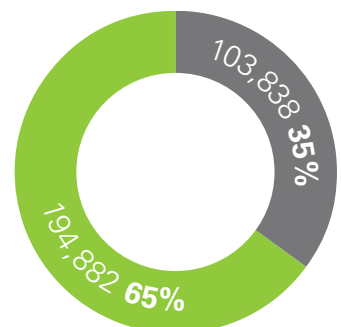
### Mass screening results in six districts conducted in June



## Infant and Young Child Feeding Counselling Update

Since January 2023, 298,720 caregivers of children aged 0-23 months received counselling on optimal infant and young child feeding practices (103,838 males and 194,882 females), representing 49% of the target 607,877. This was achieved through care group sessions, one-on-one counseling at health facilities, during growth monitoring and promotion sessions and mass screening in communities affected by Cholera and Cyclone Freddy.

In addition, Machinga and Zomba districts strengthened the awareness and uptake of optimal nutrition and hygiene practices through broadcasting radio jingles on community radio stations.



● Male  
● Female

## Back-to-School Campaign Improves IFA Uptake and ECD Services



CBCC at Solomon Village Development Committee in Blantyre district  
© UNICEF Malawi/2023

Since the start of the Back-to-School Campaign in March, a cumulative total of 40,768 adolescent girls 10-19 years old were supplemented with iron folic acid tablets. In June, a total of 3,977 adolescent girls (765 in Machinga and 3212 in Blantyre) were supplemented through the campaign. The Nutrition Sector has also ensured the continuation of early stimulation and learning services for children aged three to five by providing early childhood development (ECD) kits to Community-Based Child Care (CBCC) centres in affected communities. Overall, 4,931 children have benefitted from 98 ECD kits distributed to 62 CBCCs in nine districts of Blantyre, Chikwawa, Chiradzulu, Machinga, Mulanje, Nsanje, Phalombe, Thyolo and Zomba. The Back-to-School Campaign has been made possible with financial assistance from the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency.

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