



DOSSIER
MALNUTRITION IS
NOT A LOST CAUSE:
THE POWER OF THE
PEANUT
2025-26



Save the
Children

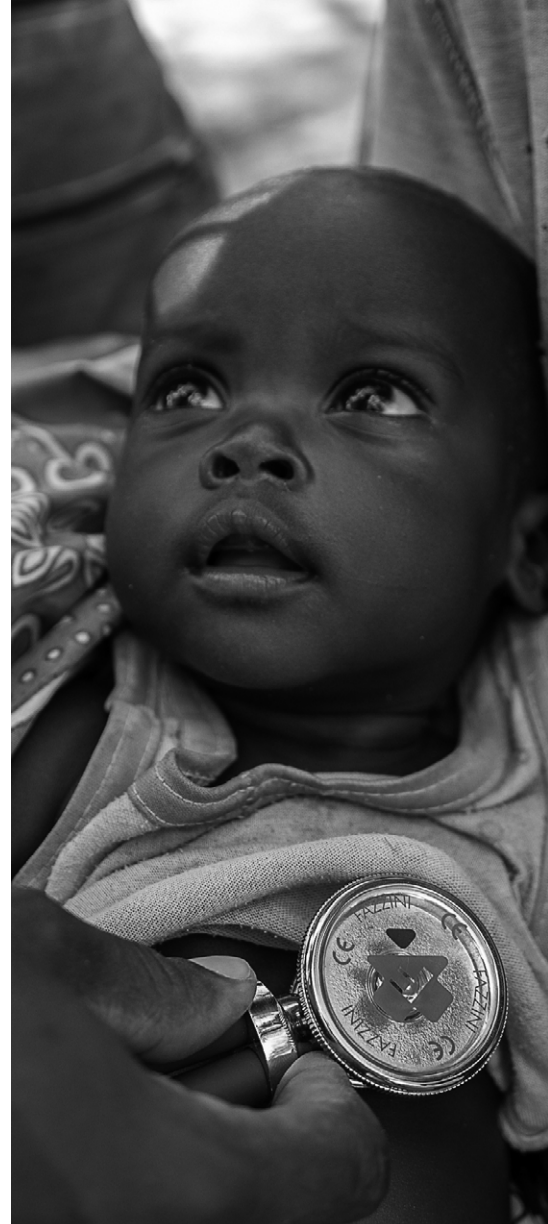
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INTRODUCTION

A new year of solidarity activities in school centres starts, and we would like to welcome you and thank you in advance for your involvement.

Your students will gain insight into a situation that affects millions of children every year: malnutrition. Moreover, they will get to know our work at Save the Children in order to save their lives with something that may seem small but holds great power: peanut paste.

Over the last few decades, there have been significant breakthroughs in improving child nutrition, which means that the quality of life of children born in 2024 is much better than it was for those born in 2000. But these advances are not equitable, and **crisis after crisis, conflict after conflict, progress is reverting, and hunger is rising, which leads us to the need to continue talking about malnutrition.**

The challenge of abolishing malnutrition in all its forms is huge. Because of this, **we need your participation in the solidarity activities from Save the Children, and we thank you for joining our solidarity and transformation movement.**

Let's begin!



WHAT IS MALNUTRITION

Since Save the Children, more than 100 years ago, one of our cornerstones has been to ensure the survival of children in vulnerable situations. Conflicts or climate change consequences can take childhood to the limit, and malnutrition is its consequence. This is not a lost cause, and it can be prevented and treated.

Malnutrition can be chronic or acute, depending on the type of diet. Chronic malnutrition is caused by low-nutrient foods consumed over a long period, while acute malnutrition is due to eating too little food for weeks.

Moreover, children with malnutrition are more prone to suffer illnesses such as diarrhoea or cholera, since their immune system is very weakened. This can complicate their situation even more.

For further information, have a look at these short videos about this topic:



[savethechildren.es/centros-educativos/
materiales-didacticos/curso-desnutricion-infantil](https://savethechildren.es/centros-educativos/materiales-didacticos/curso-desnutricion-infantil)



Currently, 16 million children under 5 years old face severe acute malnutrition every year, and, with the power of the peanut, we can treat it.

Hunger does have a cure.

GLOSSARY ABOUT MALNUTRITION

Hunger

It's the body's way of signalling that it's running short of food and needs something to eat. Sustained hunger can lead to undernutrition, although it's only one of its many causes. Illnesses such as diarrhoea or malaria can also cause it.

Malnutrition

It's a term used frequently as an alternative to undernutrition. Technically, however, it also refers to overweight and obesity. People have malnutrition if their diet doesn't provide them with the necessary calories and proteins for their growth and maintenance. Good nutrition is achieved when there is an adequate balance between the nutrients that an organism takes in, the ones absorbed, and the ones eliminated.

Undernutrition

It's the outcome of insufficient food intake and repeated infectious diseases. Some signs of undernutrition are determined depending on the age of the child: underweight, too short for one's age, dangerously thin for one's height, and deficient in vitamins and minerals.

Stunting

Concept that indicates low height-for-age. It's due to chronic or recurrent malnutrition, and it hinders growth physically and cognitively. The effects of stunting often last a lifetime.

Emaciation

This term indicates that there is an extreme thinning for a certain size. It's the result of acute or sudden malnutrition, in which the child is at an immediate risk of death due to a lack of calorie intake from food.

Food security

Situation happening when all people, at all times, have economic, physical, and social access to enough food.

Famine

It's the situation in areas in which at least one of every five homes suffers extreme food deprivation or is highly likely to suffer it.

First 1,000 days

The period that spans from conception to the age of two years. Adequate nutrition during this critical period can have a huge impact on the child's capacity to develop both mentally and physically.

THE POWER OF SMALL GESTURES

5 QUESTIONS ABOUT PEANUT PASTE

Peanut paste works wonders, which is why we use it to treat children with malnutrition. But why is it special? We explain it through these five questions and answers:

1. What is Ready-to-Use Therapeutic Food (RUTF) or, as we call it, peanut paste sachets?

Its composition is a peanut butter mix in which vegetable oil, powdered milk, high-quality proteins, vitamins, and minerals are added. The body absorbs this high-energy mix (500 Kcal per sachet) at lightning speed. With this, a malnourished child gets stronger in 4–6 weeks.

2. Why is peanut paste so useful?

It can be kept for more than 2 years without refrigeration and can be easily transported and delivered, even in very remote areas. It can be consumed directly from the container, making it simpler for children to eat it themselves, and it's easy to ration.

3. How fast do children with malnutrition recover thanks to the peanut paste sachets?

After a two-week treatment, they regain their standardized weight. We then continue for two more weeks so that they can recover their strength. For the most severe cases, the treatment can last up to 8 weeks. Apart from the nourishing peanut paste, children also receive medical attention to suppress possible infections such as pneumonia or measles.

4. Why is it only given to children between 6 and 24 months old?

Children between 6 and 24 months old are prioritized because they are the ones who are more vulnerable to acute malnutrition due to lack of breastfeeding or medical complications. Before 6 months old, they depend on breast milk (or, if it's not possible, on powdered milk support), and after 24 months, their diet can be better covered with diverse locally available foods. In severe cases, however, peanut paste can continue to be used.

5. With the rise in food prices around the world, does the price of peanut paste also increase?

Yes. The global rise in prices has also increased the cost of peanut paste sachets and other costs, such as transportation. At Save the Children, we work to ensure that every resource is used in benefit of the children.

OTHER QUESTIONS THAT CAN COME UP

What happens if a child is allergic to peanut?

Peanut allergies are extremely rare, especially in contexts where it is a regular part of the diet, as it happens in most of the places where acute malnutrition is treated. Moreover, evidence indicates that early exposure reduces the risk, which explains the low or no occurrence of reactions in our programs.

Which children receive this food, if they are all severely malnourished? Are the ones with higher survival chances given priority?

The treatment has two phases: stabilization, aimed at children with complications (infections, diarrhoea, pneumonia) and generally given in hospitals or temporary sites; and rehabilitation, oriented to cases without complications that can be treated in hospitals or on an outpatient basis by community workers. These diagnose and distribute peanut paste sachets in the community.

What happens if a child doesn't receive the full treatment?

If a child doesn't complete the treatment, he or she may not recover completely, although results depend on factors such as the severity of malnutrition, home stability, access to medical attention, and context. In fragile or displacement settings, it can be a huge challenge to even get to a surgery.

HOW WE ASSIST CHILDREN WITH MALNUTRITION

OUR WORK IN 6 STEPS



1. Does the child have malnutrition?

Firstly, we focus on the physical condition. We measure the circumference of the child's arm, and we take the weight and height.



2. Does the child have any other medical complications?

If that is the case, the child stays hospitalized immediately.

6. When the child gets better, they can go home.

Once the child feels better, the mother and her child can return home with the treatment, and we explain to her how to administer it and what to do if the child worsens.





3. Does the child have an appetite?

We ask the mother about the child's appetite and offer therapeutic food. If the child eats more than two scoops without being forced, we are sure that he or she will continue eating at home without problems.



4. We help the mother

We help the mother to keep her child well-fed and at a proper temperature. If the child is weak, we show her how to keep his or her temperature with skin-to-skin contact, blankets, and a beanie. We provide the mother with therapeutic milk and vitamins to be given with a spoon, always without forcing.



5. We treat any complication

Once the child is stabilized, we treat any additional medical complications. We also treat mothers while they are in the centres, providing them with food and vitamin supplements.

With 60€

It is the cost of a full treatment of this therapeutic peanut paste for one child: **six intensive nutrition weeks save his or her life.**

With 14€

4 children can be given high-nutrition **peanut paste for 1 week.**

With 10€

1 child, 1 week



INFANT EDUCATION

2nd CYCLE: “THE LITTLE HELPERS”

Area: I. Growth in Harmony

INITIAL JUSTIFICATION



Through these activities, Infant Education students will be able to work with the topic of child malnutrition in an engaging and playful way, enabling them to grasp key concepts meaningfully and connect them to real-life situations for a deeper understanding of the topic.

CURRICULAR APPLICATION

Stage goals

- Get to know their own body and that of others, as well as their possibilities for action, and learn to respect differences. Acquire a balanced self-image.
- Observe and explore their family, natural, and social settings.
- Progressively acquire autonomy in their routine activities.
- Develop abilities related to emotions and feelings.
- Interact with others on an equal footing and acquire guidelines for coexistence and relationships. Also, learn problem-solving and how to put themselves in other people's positions, avoiding any kind of violence.

Key competences

- Personal, social, and learning to learn competence.
- Citizenship competence.
- Cultural competence.

BASIC KNOWLEDGE AREAS

Conceptual	C. Healthy lifestyle habits for taking care of oneself and the environment. • Basic needs: manifestation, regulation, and personal control. • Habits and practices environmentally friendly and responsible with food, hygiene, and rest. • Identification of dangerous situations and accident prevention. Adjusted assessment of risk factors, adoption of preventive and safety behaviours in common situations. Collaborative attitude in illness and small accident situations.
Strengths	Identify the necessary foods in a child's diet.
Attitudinal	• Put yourself in the place of others and collaborate for an egalitarian world. • Active participation in teamwork: positive interaction and respect for others' work.



INFANT EDUCATION

2nd CYCLE



ACTIVITY 1: THE SHOPPING CART

Goal or purpose	Student's grouping	Resources
Get to know the necessary foods to have a balanced diet and avoid child malnutrition.	In pairs or small groups of 3.	• (Optional) Toy food • Sheets • Markers • Modelling clay

Description

The main topic will be explained to the students through a short story that catches their attention. For example: Amina is a 5-year-old girl in a small village in Africa with few resources and little food for her family. She has some foods but doesn't know which ones nourish her the most. Can we help Amina and her friends?

Afterwards, the children will be explained that every situation is different: some children have more access to food and some others less, which can prevent them from eating what they need. Adapted to the students' age, the idea of a healthy and energetic diet will also be treated, connecting it with child malnutrition and its current significance.

In pairs or groups, students will receive multiple foods (be it toy foods, or food made of modelling clay or paper) and they will need to choose which ones are the best option. Each team will have to help a child from Amina's small village, encouraging motivation and participation.

When finished, they will share their choices, and they will be reviewed to see if they were appropriate, always treating mistakes as part of the learning process. As an alternative, images of the foods can be projected, and a short final quiz can be given to reinforce the concepts covered in the session.

INFANT EDUCATION

2nd CYCLE



ACTIVITY 2:

WHAT DO WE EAT TODAY?

Goal or purpose	Student's grouping	Resources
Create a healthy and nutritious weekly menu to fight against malnutrition.	Groups of 4–5 students.	•Sheets •Markers, coloured crayons, pencils...

Description

As a follow-up to the first activity, students will be asked to create a menu for Amina's small village. Each group will be in charge of a day of the week. In doing so, they will work in cooperation, and everyone will contribute with their ideas.

The foods from the first activity will be the base of the dishes to be chosen, restricting the students' resources to a certain extent and bringing them closer to the reality of the situation.

Having in mind that they are starting to learn to write and read, they will be able to do drawings and try to write some of the names of the dishes. By doing this, they will work on other content and transversal skills of the curriculum at the same time.

INFANT EDUCATION

2nd CYCLE



ACTIVITY 3: AMINA'S TALE

Goal or purpose	Student's grouping	Resources
Create a tale about child malnutrition.	Big group.	• Sheets • Markers, coloured crayons, pencils...

Description

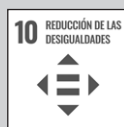
To finish the activities, each Infant Education class will jointly create a short tale that explains different stories about Amina's character and her small village.

That way, they will gain a better understanding of the situation and will be able to explain it to other friends or people they know, propelling the initiative of the school and Save the Children to a larger public.

As a variant of the activity, before the solidarity race, the Infant Education classes will present their stories to the rest of the school to show that the youngest children can also collaborate and take part in helping and spreading the word.

PRIMARY EDUCATION

INITIAL JUSTIFICATION



To raise awareness among Primary Education students about the costs of the actions carried out by Save the Children, a playful activity is proposed for the subject of Mathematics. Specifically, the budgets from the informative dossier for peanut paste will be used. Keeping in mind the ages to which this activity is aimed, teachers will choose data that allows students to perform the calculations appropriately.

For the first cycle, the activity will focus on the representation of quantities and time measurement units.

For the second cycle, the activity will focus on using the currency and reviewing arithmetic operations, so that students make use of financial education in real and contextualized situations.

For the third cycle, keeping in mind the ages to which this activity is aimed, teachers will select data that allows students to perform the calculations appropriately.

The activities are based on the same initial approach, but they are adapted to the different cycles.

CURRICULAR APPLICATION

Stage goals

- Get to know and appreciate the values and rules of coexistence, learn how to act putting yourself in the other's place, get prepared for the exercise of active citizenship, and respect human rights, as well as take part in a democratic society.
- Get to know, understand, and respect different cultures and the differences between people, the equal rights and opportunities for men and women, and the non-discrimination against people on the basis of their ethnic group, sexual orientation or identity, religion or beliefs, disability, or other conditions.
- Develop basic mathematical skills and be introduced to problem-solving requiring elemental arithmetic operations, geometric knowledge, and estimations, as well as be able to apply them to everyday life situations.
- Value hygiene and health, accept their own body and others' bodies, respect differences, and use physical education, sport, and food as a means to favour personal and social development.

Key competences

- Mathematical competence and competence in science, technology, and engineering.
- Personal, social, and learning to learn competence.
- Citizenship competence.



PRIMARY SCHOOL 1st CYCLE



ACTIVITY: THE MAGIC PEANUT

Goal or purpose	Student's grouping	Resources
Calculate the costs of malnutrition assistance	Small groups of 4–5 students, approximately.	• Cards • Sheets • Markers • Modelling clay

Description

The session will begin by introducing the character Magic Peanut, who asks students for help to fight against malnutrition. Through him, students will become familiar with peanut paste and its benefits.

Students will have to answer the questions that the character poses to them and represent them in sheets with different shapes. For every correct answer, they will receive a piece of modelling clay, which will be put together to form the peanut paste mix. Once they have all the ingredients, they will have completed the mission.

Some questions may be: What fraction is half a kilo of peanuts? What fraction corresponds to two days of paste per week? What fraction is a peanut divided into three?

To strengthen their understanding of time units, examples from the dossier can be used. Using modelling clay, students can represent how long it takes for a complete treatment per child.

They will also work with the actual cost:

- €60 allows a 6-week complete treatment.
- €40 feeds 4 children for a week.
- With €10, a whole week for a child can be covered.

PRIMARY
SCHOOL
2nd CYCLE



ACTIVITY: THE SOLIDARITY PIGGY BANK

Goal or purpose	Student's grouping	Resources
Fictional fundraising to talk about malnutrition and its real costs.	Small groups of 4–5 students, approximately.	• Cards • Box • Sheets

Description

Each group will have a specific number of coins and notes selected by the teachers, as well as a box that will be used as a fundraiser piggy bank. Keeping in mind their age, they will be informed that they are now members of an NGO and that they need to raise funds for the peanut paste, since they will have learnt about it before.

- 60 euros is the cost of a full treatment of this therapeutic peanut paste for one child: six intensive nutrition weeks save their life.
- With €40 4 children can be given high nutritional peanut paste for 1 week.
- With 10 euros, 1 child, 1 week.

Teachers will ask the students a set of questions related to the subject of Mathematics, and for every correct answer they will receive a donation for their piggy bank as a reward. This activity, which aims to encourage participation and motivation, will be put into practice in a competitive way, but always in a respectful and learning environment. In spite of having a winning team, which will be the one that raises the highest amount, the total fundraising will be added up so that they learn that every donation has a positive impact and is valued as well.

PRIMARY
SCHOOL
3rd CYCLE



ACTIVITY: THE MATHEMATICAL SPRINT

Goal or purpose	Student's grouping	Resources
Calculate the costs of malnutrition assistance.	Small groups of 4-5 students, approximately.	• Cards • Box • Sheets

Description

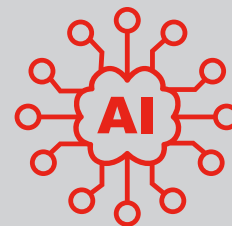
In this activity, students will work in groups, each with three cards per member. The groups must have the same number of participants.

A team member will raise a card and, with the data given at the beginning of the session, they will calculate the final amount with the rest of the team. To validate the answer, they will need to run to a corner of the class and choose the right card from a box with answers. If they guess correctly, they will receive an ingredient for the peanut paste mix. These ingredients can be fictional (drawings) if real materials are not available. The team that has collected all the ingredients will win.

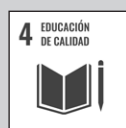
Sportsmanship should be emphasized, fomenting participation and motivation beyond competition. Since it is an activity related to an NGO, it is convenient to stress that every contribution counts and that they are valued equally; in this case, it is represented by the ingredients.

The problems will be solved with the rule of three or reduction to unity. As a reference: €60 covers the complete 6-week treatment for a child, €40 feeds 4 children for a week.

SECONDARY EDUCATION



INITIAL JUSTIFICATION



ACTIVITY: CHANGING A WORD

Goal or purpose	Student's grouping	Resources
Encourage respectful reflection on different realities and the factors that influence development.	Small groups of 4–5 students, approximately.	• Video: “La IA trabaja con el mundo que hemos creado” • Computer • Digital blackboard



youtube.com/watch?v=v4K_WZYqILc



Description

Large group viewing of the video “*La IA trabaja con el mundo que hemos creado*”, then in small groups discuss the video’s meaning, implications, and, if possible, make a similar video.

Each group will write down a prompts script, which are the instructions given to an artificial intelligence tool to create something, and will produce a short video highlighting the differences in real life by changing just one word.

These prompts, as in the video, will be related to the Rights of the Child.

Examples: “Hyperrealistic photo of a child in a school in Spain”, “Hyperrealistic photo of a child in a school in Ethiopia”, “Hyperrealistic photo of a child eating in France”, “Hyperrealistic photo of a child eating in Somalia.”

Suppose it’s not possible to make their own video. In that case, murals reflecting the purpose of the video can be made to decorate the classroom or corridors the days before the solidarity activity.

MUCH MORE ON OUR WEBSITE



We would like to finish this educational dossier by once again **thanking you for promoting Save the Children's solidarity activities at your school. Malnutrition is not a lost cause; we firmly believe it.**

Thanks to your support, we can continue working to ensure that all children have their rights guaranteed.

FAQS AND ACCOUNT NUMBERS

On our website, you will find frequently asked questions about our organisation and our activities. There you will find **the account numbers where, when entering your solidarity collection**, we will send you a receipt and a certificate of appreciation to share with your educational community.

I have already my collection. Now what?



FOR A SCHOOL TIDE IN FAVOUR OF THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD

At Save the Children, we advocate for students to be the protagonists of action. A childhood that mobilises to change the world is a childhood educated in values of empathy, sustainability, and solidarity.

Thank you for being the loudspeaker for the children who suffer the most and for showing that small gestures make a difference.



**IF YOU MOVE,
THE WORLD MOVES TOO**



Save the Children