

Maylei Ruggles  
Pella Highschool  
Pella, IA, USA  
Chad, Malnutrition

### **Malnutrition: The serious issue in Chad Africa**

According to the World Health Organization, “Malnutrition refers to deficiencies, excess or imbalances in a person’s intake of energy and/or nutrients”. That being said, around 1.9 billion people, or every one in four have experienced or are experiencing malnourishment. Though, malnutrition can be categorized into four broad groups, such as acute malnutrition, growth failure malnutrition, chronic malnutrition or stunting, and micronutrient malnutrition. The first one refers to rapid weight loss and thinning of the body. The second one being growth failure such as height and weight according to age. Third being severe malnutrition to the point it's irreversible. Then the last one being a lack of certain vitamins. People experiencing malnutrition are receiving six-hundred calories or less per day. Some shockingly high places of this deficiency include Haiti, Madagascar, and Timor-Leste, but above all in Africa is Chad. This deficiency in Chad can be helped in a few ways such as starting malnourishment treatment young, vitamin A supplements and having a budget of necessities all mapped out.

A little background on the country is that Chad is often referred to as the “Dead heart of Africa” because of its proximity to the sea and it’s desert-like conditions. Therefore, the irrigation system is extremely limited. As a result of desert-like conditions, the amount of arable land in Chad is significantly low. They get a reportedly 3.9% of actual usable land. On top of all that they get less than ten inches of rain annually.

A typical family in Africa looks quite different compared to the life of someone in the United states. The amount of people in each family is significantly high compared to the United States by 5-6 people. On a frequently asked question site about families in Chad it states “[The] average size of a family...is six to seven children, making a total of 8 to 9 direct members, not including cousins, nephews or nieces”. This means they have to feed significantly more people each night, which can be hard to keep up with if the minimum wage, converted to U.S. dollars, is around one-hundred and seven dollars monthly. Not only that, but the rate of illiteracy among their youth is around 70%, which is around 2 million people. Many women in Chad are forced to drop out of school with little education to fulfill their roles as a housewife, so there are not many jobs for them to come across. Then according to a financial site called Financial Implus it states “Making money without a degree is possible, but your success also depends on the field or area you focus on.” That being said, if a person can not read, they do not have the basic training to do a job, thus resulting in less to no money. In America, the average schooling is around 88% in 2019. To tie this back together, the women's role in their society is not to get a job but rather be a good wife. Even if they decided to get a job, they have very little education limiting them on their earning potentials.

The husband of the household may be seen as a defendor, protector and even the money earner of the house. Some jobs the husband may have include agricultural, infrastructure, ecotourism and a few other options. Though, most of these jobs require a higher level of education to have. If they do not receive this education, they are forced to get lower salary jobs.

Instead of attending school, the eldest child of the family will take care of the younger siblings while the parents are gone. The daily run through of a child in Chad starts around 6 a.m., when the mother will wake up and start making breakfast for the family. Then after breakfast, those who go to school will head that way by walking both there and back. When they get home, they will then help their parents by taking care of the younger ones, cooking and cleaning. Around six in the afternoon, they will then get dinner, which is often the same thing as the night before. Overall, a family in Chad is completely different from most other countries by their family sizes, and the average day.

One of the main challenges Chad struggles with is malnourishment, and lack of food for its people. According to the World Food Programme it explains that 66.2% of their 15.5 million people continue to live in poverty, and 2.2 million malnourished. "It [Chad] is ranked 187th out of 189 countries in the 2019 Human Development Index". 2.2 million of 15 roughly converts to 15%, rounded up. This means that 15% of their people are malnourished, that number does not include the people that are just food insecure. Because of these poor conditions, the country lacks in development and is second to lowest. Although, more pressure is applied to the country when outside countries are having conflicts. According to the same site "Hundreds of thousands of refugees who have fled conflict in neighboring countries [are then going to Chad, and feeding more mouths they can support]". One of the main reasons Chad is struggling with this malnourishment and their people is because refugees from other countries keep going to Chad. This forces them to take care of the people, resulting in there being less food for the actual citizens. Therefore, Chad struggles with a serious problem that outside countries are helping with.

This problem is caused by the continuous food insecurity in Chad but can lead to other worse health problems. This deficiency can mess with a lot of things, according to Healthline "It [malnutrition] can lead to serious issues, including stunted growth, eye problems, diabetes and heart diseases". When millions of kids are being affected by this specific disease, it is better to prevent than to cure. To conclude this paragraph, after the age of two to three these effects of malnutrition are irreversible.

The first main solution to solve this problem starts when the children are young. The first main way to correct the problem is by changing dietary needs. From the NHS site it describes what dietary changes would occur. The person receiving this change would have a more balanced diet. Eat foods that contain extra nutrients, while making sure to snack between meals. Then they will have drinks that contain a lot of calories. To sum that up, the person would be forced to revert back to a healthy stage, by force eating calories. Although this sounds dangerous, it would be with medical professionals who have an understanding of their job.

If things are more extreme as a child, they may seek additional support services. The same site also explains the individual may have home care visitors help them do things around the house. Or if the individual gets bad enough to occupational therapy, a person will come by to help them with that. If society doesn't start doing something now, more children will fall in the extreme case of range needing therapy and help around the house.

The second way to solve this problem is through vitamin A supplements. What does vitamin A provide for the body? It is commonly defined as the group of unsaturated nutritional organic compounds that include retinol, retinal, and others. This means that it is responsible for the function of normal vision, immune system and reproduction. But it can also help with the heart, lungs, kidneys and other organs to work properly. So, this vitamin is key in the growth and development of a person.

Vitamin A is really important for the body, but there is a reason this vitamin was chosen over any other one. "Deficiencies in iron, vitamin A and iodine are the most common around the world, particularly in children and pregnant women" said by the World Health Organization. Since this is one of the main vitamin deficiencies, making sure young children have these is extremely important.

Lastly, a recommendation would be to have the plan all mapped out. On the United Nations website, they have a plan for Chad and where to put all the money they get towards. "Since budgeting allows you to create a spending plan for your money, it ensures that you will always have enough money for the things you need and the things that are important to you", noted the website My Money Coach. This is extremely important to follow in this situation. By following this budget, it makes sure we can give Chad everything they need. If the budget is successful then the United Nations can work towards completing some goals. Number one of the goals is 'No poverty', the second is 'Zero Hunger', and the last one is number 8, 'Decent Work and Economic Growth'. This means the U.N. can come closer to completing their goals by budgeting their finances to successfully accommodate Chad Africa and their needs.

Finally, it may be concluded that malnutrition in Chad is a serious problem that needs to be addressed, but can be resolved by starting treatment in the early stages of life, ensuring vitamin A supplements and following a strict budget. Because Chad is ranked so low on the Human Development Index, it's going to take a lot of effort and people dedicated to helping them, this is not an overnight project. Overall, one of Chad's biggest weaknesses is the malnourishment within the population.

Citation Page:

- Author UNICEF, and Unicef. "Chad Appeal." *UNICEF*, 18 July 2017, [www.unicef.org/appeals/chad#:~:text=An%20estimated%202.7%20million%20people,per%20cent\)%20suffering%20from%20SAM.](http://www.unicef.org/appeals/chad#:~:text=An%20estimated%202.7%20million%20people,per%20cent)%20suffering%20from%20SAM.)
- "Chad." *World Food Program USA*, 28 Feb. 2020, [www.wfpusa.org/countries/chad/](http://www.wfpusa.org/countries/chad/).
- "Chad: World Food Programme." *UN World Food Programme*, [www.wfp.org/countries/chad](http://www.wfp.org/countries/chad).
- "Children's Page." *Virtual Chad: A Look beyond the Statistics into the Realities of Life in Chad, Africa*, [www.tchad.org/research/children.html#:~:text=Average%20size%20of%20a%20family,who%20are%20not%20struggling%20financially.](http://www.tchad.org/research/children.html#:~:text=Average%20size%20of%20a%20family,who%20are%20not%20struggling%20financially.)
- "Food Assistance Fact Sheet - Chad: Food Assistance." *U.S. Agency for International Development*, 13 Apr. 2020, [www.usaid.gov/chad/food-assistance](http://www.usaid.gov/chad/food-assistance).
- Maryem. "4 Types of Malnutrition and Their Effects." *Allergy Symptoms*, 6 Apr. 2018, [allergy-symptoms.org/4-types-of-malnutrition-and-their-effects/](http://allergy-symptoms.org/4-types-of-malnutrition-and-their-effects/).
- NHS Choices*, NHS, [www.nhs.uk/conditions/malnutrition/treatment/](http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/malnutrition/treatment/).
- "Right to Education : Situation around the World." *Humanium*, 22 Feb. 2018, [www.humanium.org/en/right-to-education/](http://www.humanium.org/en/right-to-education/).
- "Undernutrition Taking Huge Toll on Chad's Economy, New UN-Supported Study Finds || UN News." *United Nations*, United Nations, [news.un.org/en/story/2016/10/542542-undernutrition-taking-huge-toll-chads-economy-new-un-supported-study-finds#:~:text=UN%20Podcasts-,Undernutrition%20taking%20huge%20toll%20on%20Chad's,new%20UN%20supported%20study%20finds&text=Children%20eating%20at%20the%20IDP%20site%20in%20Mellia%2C%20Chad.&text=The%20study%20equates%20this%20lower,CFA%20in%20additional%20health%20costs.](https://news.un.org/en/story/2016/10/542542-undernutrition-taking-huge-toll-chads-economy-new-un-supported-study-finds#:~:text=UN%20Podcasts-,Undernutrition%20taking%20huge%20toll%20on%20Chad's,new%20UN%20supported%20study%20finds&text=Children%20eating%20at%20the%20IDP%20site%20in%20Mellia%2C%20Chad.&text=The%20study%20equates%20this%20lower,CFA%20in%20additional%20health%20costs.)
- "What Is Budgeting and Why Is It Important?" *My Money Coach*, [www.mymoneycoach.ca/budgeting/what-is-a-budget-planning-forecasting#:~:text=Since%20budgeting%20allows%20you%20to,you%20are%20currently%20in%20debt.](http://www.mymoneycoach.ca/budgeting/what-is-a-budget-planning-forecasting#:~:text=Since%20budgeting%20allows%20you%20to,you%20are%20currently%20in%20debt.)