

**UNITED VOICES FOR GLOBAL IMPACT (UVGI)**

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**REPORT ON GROWTH MONITORING AND INTRODUCTION OF NOURISH TO FLOURISH PROGRAM AT OUR NEW CENTRE**

**FROM:** Brown Masingati and Dafter Molande, UVGI Malawi Ambassadors

**TO:** UVGI Board of Directors and UVGI Director, USA.



*A health personnel administering growth monitoring at Tiyamike CBCC*

## Introduction

In the month of May 2025, we conducted two main activities. These are Growth Monitoring and also Introduction of the Nourish to Flourish Program at the newly adopted Community-Based Childcare Centre of Mwayiwathu. This report will concentrate solely on the two areas.

### Growth Monitoring Exercise at Tiyamike and Mwayiwathu CBCCs

Growth monitoring in children is a process where their weight and sometimes height are regularly recorded, assessed, and analyzed using growth charts.

**Objective of the exercise:** To identify potential problems with the children's growth and development, allowing for timely interventions.



*Growth monitoring exercise taking place for the first time at Mwayiwathu CBCC*

**Dates for the Activity: When did we conduct growth monitoring at the two CBCCs?**

We conducted the exercise at Tiyamike CBCC in Mtima Village on 8<sup>th</sup> May 2025; and at Mwayiwathu CBCC in Nkalapa Village on 9<sup>th</sup> May 2025.

**Attendance:** It's very pleasing to note that all children at both centres were available for the exercise. All 40 children at Tiyamike CBCC, and all 60 children at Mwayiwathu Centre were screened.

**A detailed look at the growth monitoring process**

Here's a more detailed look at the process:

1. **Measurement:** This involves regularly recording a child's weight and height, usually at scheduled appointments or checkups.
2. **Assessment:** The recorded measurements are plotted on a growth chart, which compares the child's growth to a reference curve of healthy children.
3. **Analysis:** Interpreting the child's growth pattern on the chart helps identify if they are growing according to expected norms or if there are any deviations.
4. **Action:** Based on the analysis, appropriate actions may be taken, such as counseling, dietary adjustments, or further medical evaluation if needed.



*Some of the subjects of Nkalapa Village patronizing the growth monitoring of their children at Mwayiwathu CBCC*

### **Importance of growth monitoring and why it must be conducted**

According to health and social service providers, growth monitoring is very important, hence it must be conducted regularly due to the following reasons:

- **Early detection of problems:** It allows for the early identification of growth faltering or malnutrition, enabling timely interventions before they become severe.
- **Improved health outcomes:** Early intervention can help prevent long-term health problems, such as stunted growth or impaired cognitive development.
- **Increased access to services:** Growth monitoring can encourage regular engagement with healthcare services, ensuring children receive necessary care and support.
- **Maternal reassurance:** Growth monitoring can reassure mothers and caregivers about their child's health and well-being.

### **Outcome of the exercise**

So far, all children at Tiyamike and at Mwayiwathu CBCCs were in a typically good nutritional status and there wasn't any case of severe acute malnutrition. The health and social welfare personnel from government were very convinced that that the children's health and growth statuses were at the peak.

### **Advice from the personnel that conducted the exercise**

They advised the parents to maintain providing their children with locally-made nutritious food like fruits, vegetables and soya pieces. To UVGI, they personnel urged us to continue providing fortified porridge.

### **Impact this Growth Monitoring will likely bring both to Tiyamike and Mwayiwathu CBCCs**

- Growth monitoring in children at the two community-based childcare centres is helping in identifying and addressing nutritional problems and health issues at an early stage. So far, because of this exercise that we are conducting so regularly/periodically, all the children—that is, 40 children at Tiyamike CBCC and 60 children at Mwayiwathu CBCC have been measured, assessed and analyzed during last month's growth monitoring.
- It's allowing for timely interventions, tailored management plans, and better nutritional status, ultimately promoting optimal growth and development.
- Improved nutritional status: Growth monitoring, when combined with nutrition promotion activities, has led (and is leading) to improved infant and child feeding practices and greater access to health services.
- Better long-term outcomes: By addressing nutritional problems and health issues early, growth monitoring is playing a crucial role of contributing to better long-term health, cognitive development, and overall well-being.

### **Introduction of the Nourish to Flourish Program at Mwayiwathu CBCC**

Mwayiwathu CBCC has a total of 60 children, and the incorporation of this centre into our Feeding Program was a very good gesture that was highly welcomed by all people of Nkalapa Village. We are very pleased to report to you here that Mwayiwathu CBCC is now on our 'Nourish to Flourish Programme' since last month (i.e. May 2025).



*Fortified porridge now ready to be served on the children of Mwayiwathu CBCC*

### **How the program has begun and how it is faring**

Honestly speaking, the program has begun and is faring on a very good note. Below are some indicators of this fact (that the program has begun and is faring on a very good note):

- ✓ There is no absenteeism being registered among the children since the Nourish to Flourish Program started.
- ✓ Village Headman Nkalapa and his subjects, including parents and guardians of the children, are all voluntarily participating in mobilizing various some resources as well as in the cooking of the children's fortified porridge.
- ✓ There is unity of purpose among the committee members of the CBCC in ensuring that the children eat well-prepared food.

### **Impacts the Nourish to Flourish Program has brought/will likely bring**

There both short-term and long-term impacts that this program will likely bring and these are as follows:

#### **A. Short-term Impacts**

1. **Physical Development:** Good nutrition will gradually promote growth in the children, thereby preventing them from stunting (shortness for age) and wasting (thinness for height). These conditions are associated with increased risk of infections and diseases due to malnutrition.
2. **Cognitive Development:** Good nutrition will help in brain development, thereby enhancing the children's memory, attention, and learning abilities.
3. **Immune System:** Good nutrition will help the children's immune system to be more powerful and vigilant against and any infectious attacks.

#### **B. Long-term Impacts**

- 1) ***Health Risks:*** Good nutrition will likely decrease the risk of developing chronic diseases like diabetes, heart disease, and obesity in later life.
- 2) ***Educational Outcomes:*** Children with good nutrition will not struggle academically, resulting in higher educational achievement and unlimited future opportunities.
- 3) ***Economic Impact:*** Increased productivity and potential for higher earnings in adulthood due to good health and cognitive development will likely contribute to a cycle of prosperity.
- 4) ***Mental Health:*** Good nutrition will also impact mental health, potentially leading to a much healthier life free from anxiety, depression, and any other behavioral problems.

### **Importance of Early Childhood Nutrition:**

Early childhood nutrition is very important in many ways, and some of them are as follows:

- Early childhood nutrition is crucial for laying the foundation for lifelong health and development.
- Breastfeeding is highly recommended for infants as it provides essential nutrients and antibodies.
- Providing a balanced and varied diet from infancy is essential for optimal growth and development.

So, in view of the foregoing, there is need to encourage and intensify early childhood nutrition for the children's growth and development.

## CONCLUSION

Growth Monitoring and Nourish to Flourish Programmes are very important for the children's well-being. The two programs go hand-in-hand and are interlinked. While nutrition is a critical part of health and development, growth monitoring is an essential aspect of pediatric healthcare that involves systematically tracking a child's growth parameters, primarily height and weight, over time. The process helps identify growth patterns, assess nutritional status, and detect potential problems early. These are the things that we are doing at Tiyamike and Mwayiwathu CBCC.

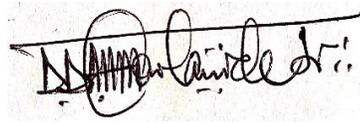
The people of Mtima and Nkalapa Villages where the two CBCCs are, are always thankful to UVGI (both the Director and the Board of Directors) for all the support rendered to their children through the Nourish-to-Flourish and Growth Monitoring Programs.

Compiled by



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**END OF REPORT**