

ASSESSING NUTRITION SITUATIONS IN EMERGENCIES

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Terms and Classification

Anthropometric Terms

Indicators	Indices	Malnutrition Type
Stunting	Height for Age (HFA)	Chronic
Underweight	Weight for Age (WFA)	Chronic and Acute
Wasting	Weight for Height (WFH)	Acute

Malnutrition Classification and Cutoffs

	Z-score (SD)
Mild	-2.00 to -1.01
Moderate	-3.00 to -2.01
Severe	< -3.00

Common Terms for Acute Malnutrition for Children 6-59 Months

GAM (Global Acute Malnutrition)

WFH < -2.0 Z-score or < 80.0% Median
All with edema included.

SAM (Severe Acute Malnutrition)

WFH < -3.0 Z-score or < 70.0% Median
All with edema included.



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Categories of Nutrition/ Mortality Situation

	Wasting %	CMR*
Low (Acceptable)	< 5.0	< 1.0
Medium (Poor)	5.0 to 9.9	1.0 to 1.9
High (Serious)	10.0 to 14.9	2.0 to 4.9
Very High (Critical)	≥ 15.0	≥ 5.0

Use of categories requires contextual information including aggravating factors and trends.

Wasting defined as WFH < -2.0 Z-score in children 6 to 59 months. Excludes edema.

* Crude Mortality Rate (CMR) expressed as deaths/10,000/day applies to all adults and children.

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Commonly Used Eligibility Criteria for Selective Feeding Programs

		Severe	Moderate
6 - 59 Months	WFH	< 70.0 % median < -3.0 Z-score	70.0 to 79.9 % median -3.0 to -2.01 Z-score
	MUAC ¹	< 11.0 cm	11.0 to 12.49 cm
	Edema	Yes	No
Adults	Body Mass Index ²	< 16.0	16.0 to 16.99
	MUAC	< 16.0 cm	16.0 to 18.49 cm

¹ MUAC = Mid-Upper Arm Circumference

² Body Mass Index (BMI) = weight (kg)/[height (m)]² excludes pregnant women

Sources: Sphere (2004); WHO (1999,1995), OFDA FOG (2005), SCF (2004)