

Severe Acute Malnutrition In Malawi

Francis Lubega (ECE), Brian Mahan (ECE)

Advisor: Professors Jill Rulfs (Biology) & Helen Vasallo (Management)

Abstract

Severe Acute Malnutrition (SAM) is an ongoing problem in developing countries. With the use of Ready-to-Use Therapeutic Foods (RUTF) as opposed to the regular corn/soy blend, SAM can be treated more efficiently. A study in Malawi will serve as proof.

Background

- SAM: weight-for-height measurement of 70% or > below average
- A mid-upper-arm circumference less than 10 cm in children aged 1-5
- Accounts for over half the preventable deaths in developing country children
- Corn/soy blend has been the staple treatment with minimal success.



Corn/soy blend



RUTF

Methods

- Settle upon 2 groups of children with SAM.
- Provide one w/RUTF the other w/the corn/soy blend.
- Record body changes every 2 weeks.



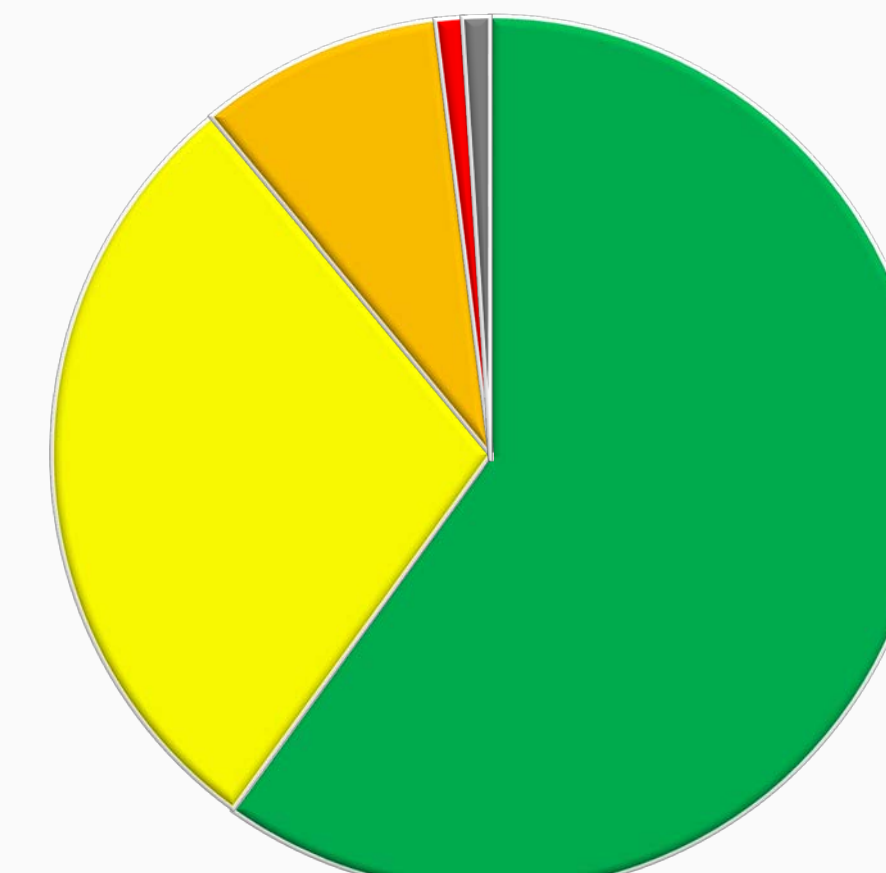
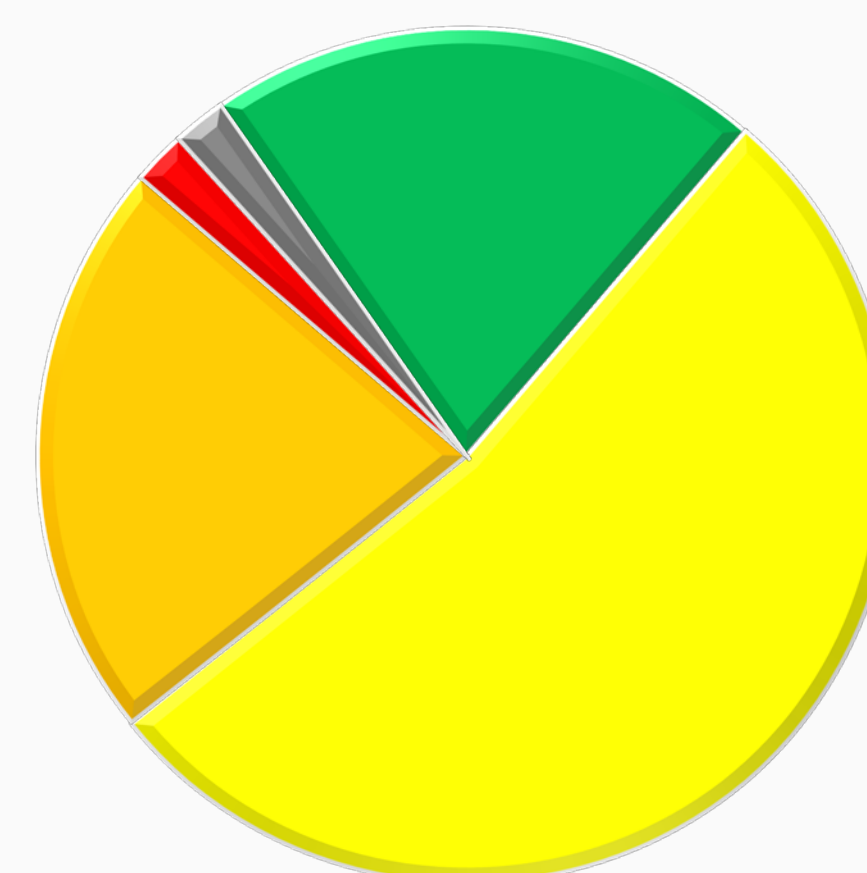
- Continue process for 8 week period.
- Compare both groups after 8 week cycle.
- See children for a 6 month follow up and measure growth, weight gain etc.
- Compare both groups again.

Predicted Results

Standard Fortified Corn/Soy Blend

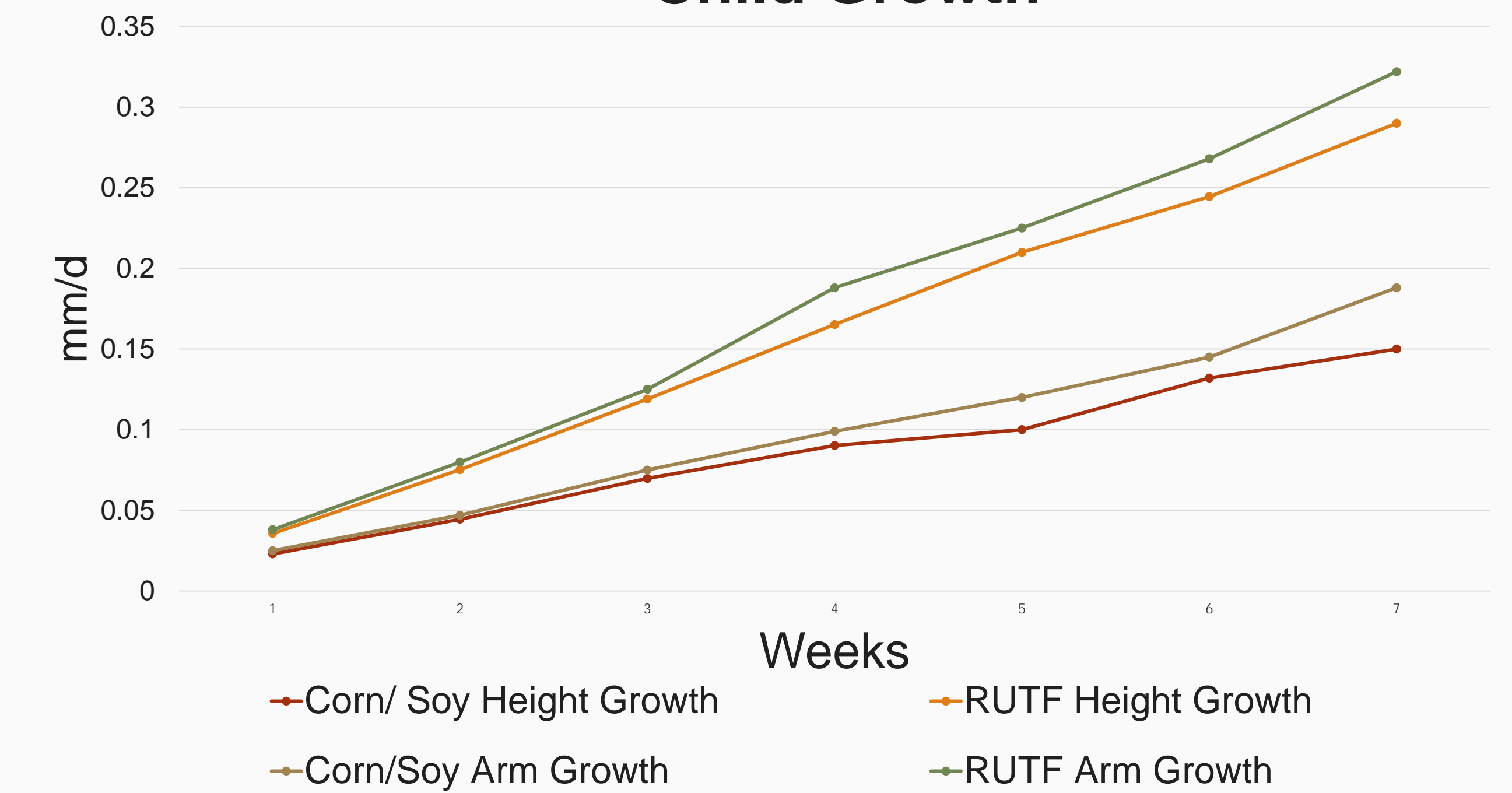
Ready to use Therapeutic Food

- Weight-for-height >90%
- 85% <weight-for-height, 90%
- Weight-for-height <85%
- Relapsed or died
- Dropped out



Predicted Results Continued

Child Growth



- 60% taking RUTF recovered from SAM while just 21% taking the corn/soy blend.
- 9/100 children (RUTF) & 22/100 (corn/soy) didn't make a weight-for-height ratio above 85%.
- 46/68 children (RUTF) maintained a healthy weight compared to 10/65 (corn/soy) after a 6 month period.

Conclusions

The study illustrates that RUTF is more effective in combating SAM compared to the standard corn/soy based supplementary food, helping children grow, gain & maintain weight. The study could be expanded to more developing countries to increase RUTF use.

References

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