



# Policy Analysis of Fortified Blended Food Interventions for Moderate Acute Malnutrition in Niger: Mid-Upper Arm Circumference Recovery in Tahoua, 2005

Moussa Hamadou<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Abdou Moumouni University, Niamey

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**Correspondence:** [mhamadou@outlook.com](mailto:mhamadou@outlook.com)

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## Author notes

*Moussa Hamadou is affiliated with Abdou Moumouni University, Niamey and focuses on Medicine research in Africa.*

## Abstract

Moderate acute malnutrition remains a significant public health challenge in Niger, where fortified blended foods are a standard policy intervention. Robust analysis of programme effectiveness is required to inform health policy. This policy analysis evaluated the impact of a fortified blended food supplement on nutritional recovery, measured by mid-upper arm circumference, among children with moderate acute malnutrition in the Tahoua region. It assessed operational effectiveness and identified policy-relevant factors influencing outcomes. The analysis conducted a retrospective review of monitoring data from a non-governmental feeding programme. Data on mid-upper arm circumference measurements at admission and discharge for a cohort of children meeting moderate acute malnutrition criteria were analysed to determine recovery rates. Programme protocols and contextual implementation factors were examined. The analysis found a suboptimal recovery rate, with only 58% of children achieving the target mid-upper arm circumference by discharge. Key factors influencing outcomes included irregular supplement supply chains and low caregiver adherence to prescribed feeding protocols, frequently due to ration sharing within households. The fortified blended food intervention demonstrated limited effectiveness in achieving nutritional recovery in this context. Policy and programme design must extend beyond supplement provision to address systemic and behavioural barriers. Policy revisions should integrate strategies to strengthen supply chain resilience. Distribution should be complemented with enhanced caregiver counselling and behaviour change communication. Policy should also consider evaluating revised or complementary food products to improve adherence and outcomes. moderate acute malnutrition, fortified blended food, mid-upper arm circumference, Niger, policy analysis, nutrition programmes This analysis provides evidence for policymakers on the operational challenges of a standard malnutrition intervention, highlighting critical gaps in implementation that limit its effectiveness.

**Keywords:** *Moderate acute malnutrition, Fortified blended foods, Mid-upper arm circumference, Sahel, Programme evaluation, Niger*

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