

Obstacles to Reducing Childhood Obesity

Language English

Malri Twalib's case of obesity demonstrates how environments need to support people to eat well and be active, everywhere in the world and across the lifespan.



- Name: Malri Twalib
- Age: 5
- Country: United Republic of Tanzania
- Diagnosis: Obesity

Malri Twalib is a 5 year old boy living in a poor rural area of the Kilimanjaro District of the United Republic of Tanzania. Health workers from a nearby medical centre spotted his weight problem last year during a routine community outreach activity. The diagnosis was clear: childhood obesity.

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One year later, Malri's health condition hasn't changed for the better and neither has his excessive consumption of porridge and animal fat. His fruit and vegetable intake also remains seriously insufficient — "it is just too hard to find reasonably priced products during the dry season, so I can't manage his diet," his mother Fadhila complains.

The community health workers who recently visited Malri for a follow-up also noticed that he was holding the same flat football as before –the word "Health" stamped on it couldn't pass unnoticed. Malri's neighbourhood is littered with sharp and rusted construction debris and the courtyard is too small for him to be able to play ball games. In fact, he rarely plays outside. "It is simply too hazardous. He could get hurt," his mother says.

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