

Things to notice: how many feedings in a day, how much in each feed, whether the child's food included pulses, vegetables, oil.

- Ask specifically about protective foods which are not given daily.
- Ask about feeding during illness.



Illness and treatment

- Ask whether the child fell ill during past six months (ask specifically about diarrhoea, fever, cold and cough). Start with most recent illness, and then ask them to recall backwards –“ before this when was he/she sick? etc.
- What actions did the family take during illness? Which provider did they go to?
- What difficulties did the family face in accessing healthcare and how much did it cost?
- What are the likely inessential services or expenditures which they are getting into?



Access to anganwadi services

- Is the child taken regularly every month to the Anganwadi Centre (AWC) for weighing? Have they seen the growth curve?
- Is the family availing of food supplements from the anganwadi, is it regular, reliable and of variety needed and reasonable quality?

Skill in Analysis

Based upon the replies to these questions, you will form an understanding of the multiple causes of malnutrition in that specific child. It is never one factor,

Given below are examples of understanding that ASHA formed in two children:

Banu was a nine month old girl with moderate malnutrition. She is being breastfed and only this month was started on complementary food. She eats rice and dal from her parents' plate while they are eating, once at about 10.00 am and then about 6.00 p.m. She had diarrhoea once, one month ago, but no other illness. You gave her ORS and she became alright with it. She does not go to the anganwadi or get rations from there. Her immunisation is on schedule.

Rafay is an 18 month old boy who is severely underweight. He has no odema, but there is some wasting. He cannot go to the hospital because his mother cannot leave her younger child and she also has to go to work as she is the only earning member. Rafay is not being breastfed, but gets to eat roti, dal and vegetables. He eats about half a roti or one roti thrice a day. But his mother complains that he does not eat a lot and has very poor appetite. He has frequent episodes of respiratory infection but no other illness. His immunisation schedule is complete.