



## **ASIA/NEPAL - We need to change behavioral attitudes to combat malnutrition**

Kathmandu (Agenzia Fides) - Across the country, child malnutrition, which causes stunting (low height for age, also known as chronic malnutrition) and other long-term effects on health, is not due to food insecurity or lack of access to nutritious food, but because of family habits that do not include this type of nutrition. In a recent report, released by World Food Programme in Nepal, states that the rate of malnutrition is particularly high in wealthy families and to cope with this phenomenon, it is important to improve the behavioral attitudes of families at a nutritional level. In the Country nearly half of the children under five years of age suffer from chronic malnutrition. The preconceptions and misconceptions on nutrition are different and also very popular for pregnant women, such as the fact that if they eat too much they have difficulty at the time of delivery. This prejudice, according to an expert of health care of the western district in Kapil Vastu, involves a crash diet in women as they get pregnant. Among the foods "to avoid" yogurt, pumpkin and eggs. Compounding the taboo, the maternal malnutrition and consequent malnutrition are often the result of gender discrimination based on the division of food. Traditionally, women eat less than men and this can lead to uneven growth of the fetus. Many young children eat the meal of a parent, usually that of the mother. The hierarchy provides that the distribution of food begins from the males in the family and, as a result, children who eat from the plate of the mother often have few nutritious foods. According to health experts, malnourished children often have difficulty in school learning and increased vulnerability to chronic diseases that can damage the body. (AP) (Agenzia Fides 06/05/2013)