

Welthungerhilfe with Microsoft AI initiates project to deal malnutrition

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India is the first country to pilot the Child Growth Monitor app to scan 10,000 children for signs of malnutrition



Welthungerhilfe, one of the largest private aid organizations in Germany, has launched a project in India to help address malnutrition in children with the Child Growth Monitor solution a cloud-based, smartphone application powered by Microsoft Azure and AI services. Developed by Welthungerhilfe, Child Growth Monitor is an intelligent application that can detect malnutrition and enable health workers to identify and provide care to children struggling from chronic undernourishment. India is the first country to pilot this project. Welthungerhilfe's India based partner Action Against Hunger is scanning 10,000 children under the age of five years across Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan by March 2019. 12 teams of 150 trained health workers have been provided app-enabled smartphones to collect data of children.

The current data available on childhood undernourishment around the globe is inaccurate as manual weight measurement scales often lack standardization. Moreover, it is difficult for the human eye to detect if a child is suffering from malnutrition. Using an infrared sensor available in smartphones, the Child Growth Monitor App directly captures 3D measurements of a child's height, body volume and weight ratio, and loads the data onto Azure Cloud. The scans are then evaluated by nutritionists and IT specialists using Azure AI solutions, analyzing the child's dietary health. This data can further be used by field workers to work out nutrition plans and provide children with vitamin-rich provisions based on their requirements. The Child Growth Monitor App has a learning algorithm, which gets smarter with each measurement.

Commenting on the program, Susanne Mehrtens, Senior Industry Marketing Manager, Microsoft Germany said, "A large amount of complex data requires state-of-the-art technologies to make them usable for Welthungerhilfe. Azure's AI services provide solutions that continually improve and make decisions on their own."

The essential characteristic of all Microsoft's AI for Good initiatives is to combine Microsoft's technology and expertise in AI and data science with the talent and expertise of groups around the world in fields such as environmental science, disability needs and humanitarian assistance. Microsoft works deeply with selected nongovernmental organizations (NGO)s and humanitarian organizations through financial grants, technology investments and partnerships.