

OFFICIAL FEEDBACK FORM

DIALOGUE TITLE	Until all are fed, Faith community dialogue on hunger and nutrition in Geneva
DIALOGUE DATE	Friday, 11 October 2024 13:15 GMT +02:00
CONVENED BY	Anne-Marie Vuignier, UN Representative Geneva, World Vision International Feedback published on behalf of Convenor by: Anne-Marie Vuignier. Convenor
EVENT LANGUAGE	English and French
HOST LOCATION	Geneva, Switzerland
GEOGRAPHIC SCOPE	Both Geneva community and international
AFFILIATIONS	Week-End of Prayer and Action in Geneva
DIALOGUE EVENT PAGE	https://nutritiondialogues.org/dialogue/54544/



The outcomes from Nutrition Dialogues will contribute to developing and identifying the most urgent and powerful ways to improve nutrition for all, with a focus on women and children and young people. Each Dialogue contributes in four distinct ways:

- Published as publicly available PDFs on the Nutrition Dialogues Portal
- Available as public data on the Nutrition Dialogues Portal "Explore Feedback" page
- Available publicly within a .xls file alongside all Feedback Form data for advanced analysis
- Synthesised into reports that cover which nutrition challenges are faced, what actions are urgently needed and how should these be taken forward - particular, in advance of the Nutrition for Growth Summit in Paris, March 2025.

SECTION ONE: PARTICIPATION

TOTAL NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS

27

PARTICIPATION BY AGE RANGE

0	0-11	0	12-18	2	19-29
5	30-49	19	50-74	1	75+

PARTICIPATION BY GENDER

15	Female	12	Male	0	Other/Prefer not to say
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NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS FROM EACH STAKEHOLDER GROUP

1	Children, Youth Groups and Students	1	Civil Society Organisations (including consumer groups and environmental organisations)
0	Educators and Teachers	25	Faith Leaders/Faith Communities
0	Financial Institutions and Technical Partners	0	Food Producers (including farmers)
0	Healthcare Professionals	0	Indigenous Peoples
0	Information and Technology Providers	0	Large Business and Food Retailers
0	Marketing and Advertising Experts	0	National/Federal Government Officials and Representatives
0	News and Media (e.g. Journalists)	0	Parents and Caregivers
0	Science and Academia	0	Small/Medium Enterprises
0	Sub-National/Local Government Officials and Representatives	0	United Nations
0	Women's Groups	0	Other (please state)

OTHER STAKEHOLDER GROUPS

More than 10 people identified both as faith communities and civil society organisations being from faith based organisations. Due to the nature of this dialogue the focus was given to the faith community aspect.

ADDITIONAL DETAIL ON PARTICIPANT DIVERSITY

This group is made up predominately of members of a local faith community with connections to local and international efforts around addressing matters of hunger and nutrition.

SECTION TWO: FRAMING AND DISCUSSION

FRAMING

The Faith Community Nutrition Dialogue held in Geneva, Switzerland, was part of the Weekend of Prayer and Action (WoPA) Against Hunger, hosted by the Evangelical Lutheran Church. WoPA is a coalition of 16 global Christian organizations that mobilize around World Food Day (October 16) to pray and act against the global hunger crisis. This initiative, which began in 2017, has grown in organization and participation, paralleling the increasing severity of the hunger crisis. The session began with the WoPA 2024 promotional video, featuring a benediction from the WoPA 2024 Liturgy guide: "Go forth and share food with the hungry..." This benediction underscored the belief that hunger is preventable in the 21st century, despite the challenges posed by conflict, climate change, contagion, and the cost of living. Our convener, introduced the nutrition dialogue process, emphasizing the critical role of faith communities in addressing hunger (See presentation attached). Our curator welcomed participants, highlighting the fundamental Christian practice of sharing bread and wine, which symbolizes both spiritual and physical nourishment. She invited participants to reconnect these aspects, emphasizing the promise from Isaiah 58 that flourishing lives come from supporting those in need. A special keynote was delivered, noting the stark reality of global hunger, with 733 million people facing hunger in 2023 and projections of 582 million chronically undernourished by 2030. He highlighted the worsening situation for children and the interconnectedness of hunger with land and water security. The WCC's Living Planet Programme addresses these issues holistically, focusing on climate and economic justice, ecumenical diakonia, and land, water, and food justice. This was followed by 4 inspirations (see programme attached), highlighting the acute hunger situation, focus on refugee population and actions being done in Geneva by FBO through food distribution and soup kitchens.

NUTRITION SITUATION PRESENTATION

<https://nutritiondialogues.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/Introduction-to-WePA-Nutrition-dialogues.pptx>

DISCUSSION

The discussion questions were as follows: • What values, ethical and/or faith-related beliefs or practices drive your approach to food and nutrition in the community? • What actions are needed to address hunger and ensure good nutrition for all in our community and beyond? What are the challenges? • What is the unique and essential role that faith communities are/could be playing in addressing barriers or promoting assets in that regards?

SECTION THREE: DIALOGUE OUTCOMES

CHALLENGES

- 1. Political Polarization and Apathy:** The lack of political will and public interest in addressing hunger, exacerbated by global crises like conflict and climate change was brought out in the discussion. This apathy has led to a stagnation in efforts to combat hunger, despite the increasing severity of the crisis.
- 2. Systemic Issues:** Participants highlighted systemic problems such as food deserts, obesity, and malnutrition, which require more than just food distribution but systemic change. These issues are deeply rooted in economic and social structures that perpetuate inequality and limit access to nutritious food.
- 3. Global Solidarity:** There is a declining global solidarity, making it harder to garner support for international hunger issues. This inward-looking trend is dangerous, as it undermines efforts to address global challenges collectively.
- 4. War and Conflict:** Ongoing conflicts, particularly in Gaza and Sudan, have significantly worsened the hunger crisis. These conflicts disrupt food production and distribution, leading to increased food insecurity and malnutrition.

URGENT ACTIONS

- 1. Local Solutions:** Emphasizing the need for local communities to find their own solutions rather than relying on top-down approaches. This involves empowering local leaders and organizations to develop context-specific strategies that address the unique challenges they face.
- 2. Education:** Working with children and families to teach the importance of sharing and nutrition. Education initiatives should focus on building awareness about healthy eating habits and the importance of nutrition for overall well-being.
- 3. Lobbying Authorities:** Advocating for policy changes at local and international levels. This includes pushing for policies that support food security, sustainable agriculture, and equitable access to resources.
- 4. Mindfulness:** Encouraging people to be mindful of their food choices and the broader implications of their consumption. This involves promoting sustainable and ethical food practices that consider the environmental and social impact of food production and consumption.
- 5. Living Simply:** Promoting a lifestyle that prioritizes simplicity and sharing resources. This approach encourages individuals to reduce waste, share with others, and live in a way that supports the well-being of the community.
- 6. Space for Dialogue:** Creating spaces for churches to come together and discuss topics related to hunger and nutrition. This fosters collaboration and the sharing of good practices that can be replicated in different contexts.
- 7. Communication:** Enhancing communication to share good practices and replicate successful initiatives. This involves creating networks for knowledge exchange and collaboration among faith-based organizations.

AREAS OF DIVERGENCE

1. Approaches to Solutions: There were differing opinions on whether solutions should come from local communities or be driven by larger organizations and governments. Some participants advocated for grassroots initiatives, while others emphasized the need for coordinated efforts at higher levels. This seems to boil down to a 'both/and' idea.

2. Focus Areas: Some participants emphasized immediate emergency responses, while others advocated for long-term resilience and systemic change. This divergence reflects the complexity of addressing hunger, which requires both short-term relief and long-term strategies.

3. Role of Faith Communities: While all agreed on the importance of faith communities, there were varied perspectives on how these communities should engage in advocacy and direct action. Some emphasized the moral and spiritual role of faith communities, while others focused on their practical contributions to addressing hunger.

4. Unique Role of Faith-Based Actors: The French language group particularly highlighted the unique role of faith-based actors in being present in places where governments are not, creating safe spaces, and fostering trust. They emphasized the importance of giving people dignity, options, and ownership in growing their food, and recognized the influence and compassion of faith-based actors.

OVERALL SUMMARY

The Faith Community Nutrition Dialogue in Geneva was part of the Weekend of Prayer and Action (WoPA) Against Hunger, hosted by the Evangelical Lutheran Church. This initiative, which began in 2017, involves 16 global Christian organizations mobilizing around World Food Day to address the global hunger crisis. The session began with a promotional video emphasizing the moral imperative to combat hunger, which is seen as preventable despite challenges like conflict, climate change, contagion, and the cost of living.

The dialogue highlighted the critical role of faith communities in addressing hunger, involving various stakeholders and supporting policy initiatives for the upcoming Nutrition for Growth Summit. An overview of hunger, food insecurity, and malnutrition set the stage for the discussions.

The curator welcomed participants, emphasizing the connection between spiritual and physical nourishment and the promise from Isaiah 58 that flourishing lives come from supporting those in need. A keynote address highlighted the global hunger crisis, with millions facing hunger and projections of worsening conditions. The interconnectedness of hunger with land and water security was emphasized, noting significant degradation and scarcity issues. An upcoming publication will provide key indicators and best practices related to these issues.

Contributions from various perspectives highlighted the frustration with the lack of progress in addressing hunger, the role of churches in supporting vulnerable populations, the importance of local solutions and the role of women in addressing food justice, and local efforts in Geneva to support disadvantaged people through holistic approaches. Small group discussions focused on values driving their approach to food and nutrition, such as hospitality, care, companionship, and moral obligation. They identified actions needed to address hunger and challenges faced. The French speaking group particularly emphasized core values like the belief that all human beings are created in the image of God and the commandment to love God and one's neighbour. They highlighted practices like creating a community table and incorporating the Lord's Prayer into their routine.

Key challenges identified included political polarization and apathy, systemic issues like food deserts and malnutrition, declining global solidarity, and the impact of war and conflict. Actions identified to address hunger included empowering local communities, education, lobbying authorities, promoting mindfulness and simple living, creating spaces for dialogue, and enhancing communication to share good practices.

The atmosphere of the dialogue was both encouraging and sobering. Participants were energized by the collective commitment to tackle hunger, yet acutely aware of the dire situation and the lack of global traction to address it as a global problem. This duality underscored the urgency and complexity of the issue, highlighting the need for both immediate action and long-term strategies.

Overall, the dialogue underscored the importance of faith communities in addressing hunger through a combination of immediate relief and long-term strategies, leveraging their unique strengths and moral influence to create sustainable solutions.

SECTION FOUR: PRINCIPLES OF ENGAGEMENT & METHOD

PRINCIPLES OF ENGAGEMENT

The Faith Community Nutrition Dialogue in Geneva was part of the Weekend of Prayer and Action (WoPA) Against Hunger and hosted by the Evangelical Lutheran Church. This initiative, which began in 2017, involves 16 global Christian organizations mobilizing around World Food Day to address the global hunger crisis. This particular face to face meeting was organised together with 6 other faith based org./churches: World Council of Churches, ACT Alliance, Lutheran World Federation, World Methodist Council, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Geneva and World Evangelical Alliance. The coordination committee organised together the prayer service and time of fellowship in addition to the dialogue. The convener, curator, facilitators and note-takers were part of the committee and received specific briefing in advance as per the official guidance. As the dialogue took place on the International Day on the Girl Child there was a particular attention given to the impact of malnutrition on girls.

METHOD AND SETTING

We used the methodology suggested in the guidance for stakeholders. As this was part of a wider event that included also a prayer service and time of fellowship beforehand. We shortened the time of group discussion to ensure retention of a good number of participants in this busy period. We were fortunate to be able to use the premises of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Geneva, situated in the old town of Geneva that included two separate rooms in a very quiet setting, ideal for reflection.

ADVICE FOR OTHER CONVENORS

We thought we could achieve a lot of discussions group settings of 40 minutes as we had a longer time before hand to get in the topic and discussions through prayer time and shared lunch with already introductory discussions, but we realised that we would have benefited from more time as the discussions were very rich with many various experiences and backgrounds from both local and global perspectives.

FEEDBACK FORM: ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We would like to thank all participating organisations for their support to WV in the organisation and coordination of the event: World Council of Churches, ACT Alliance, Lutheran World Federation, World Methodist Council, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Geneva and World Evangelical Alliance. And in particular the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Geneva for making it possible for us to use their beautiful premises.

RELEVANT LINKS

- **Week end of Prayer and Action against hunger**
<https://www.wvi.org/emergencies/hunger-crisis/weekend-of-prayer>
- **10 Commandments of Food**
<https://www.oikoumene.org/sites/default/files/Document/TenCommandmentsFood.pdf>
- **Breaking the Cycle: Malnutrition's Toll on Women and Girls**
<https://www.worldvision.org.uk/about/blogs/malnutrition-cost-to-girls/>
- **Go forth video**
<https://vimeo.com/933819534>

ATTACHMENTS

- **Keynote address, SG WCC Rev.Dr.Pr. Pillay**
https://nutritiondialogues.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/Keynote-address-by-Jerry-Pillay_WOPA-2024_Draft.docx
- <https://nutritiondialogues.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/WoPA-Group-picture-2.jpg>
- <https://nutritiondialogues.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/WoPA-Group-picture-1.jpg>
- <https://nutritiondialogues.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/WoPA-Group-photo-3-scaled.jpg>
- **Sermon for WEPA**
<https://nutritiondialogues.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/Bearers-of-Hope-WEPA-Isaiah-58-6-12-11-October-2024-12pt.docx>
- **Presentation on Community work**
<https://nutritiondialogues.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/PPP-ELCG-short.pptx>