

# OFFICIAL FEEDBACK FORM

<b>DIALOGUE TITLE</b>	A Nutrition Dialogue for Faryab
<b>DIALOGUE DATE</b>	Monday, 18 November 2024 14:30 GMT +04:30
<b>CONVENED BY</b>	Murtaza Haidary, Senior MEAL Coordinator, World Vision Afghanistan; Naser Abed, Zonal MEAL Coordinator, World Vision Afghanistan Event announced on behalf of the Convenor by: Dr Mark D Calder. Technical support and advocacy Feedback published on behalf of Convenor by: Dr Mark D Calder. Technical Support
<b>EVENT LANGUAGE</b>	Dari Persian
<b>HOST LOCATION</b>	Maymana, Afghanistan
<b>GEOGRAPHIC SCOPE</b>	Faryab Province
<b>DIALOGUE EVENT PAGE</b>	<a href="https://nutritiondialogues.org/dialogue/54810/">https://nutritiondialogues.org/dialogue/54810/</a>



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

31

## PARTICIPATION BY AGE RANGE

0	0-11	0	12-18	14	19-29
17	30-49	0	50-74	0	75+

## PARTICIPATION BY GENDER

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

0	Children, Youth Groups and Students	1	Civil Society Organisations (including consumer groups and environmental organisations)
5	Educators and Teachers	3	Faith Leaders/Faith Communities
0	Financial Institutions and Technical Partners	5	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)	18	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

## ADDITIONAL DETAIL ON PARTICIPANT DIVERSITY

Participants were diversified by age, gender, education, marital status, and socioeconomic status. Half were from rural areas and half from urban areas. The participants belonged to the Pushton Kot and Maimana districts. Participants were selected from those areas where needs are high, with a focus on the most vulnerable households. Most participants reported not receiving any type of services from any NGOs including World Vision, so as to avoid any misplaced sense of 'debt'.

# SECTION TWO: FRAMING AND DISCUSSION

## FRAMING

The adults' and stakeholders' workshops were structured into three main segments: opening, discussion groups, and consolidation. In the opening section, all the adult participants and facilitators introduced themselves to each other. A total of 31 participants 16 females and 15 males attended the nutrition dialogues in Faryab province. The event was facilitated by conveners, curators, facilitators, and record keepers who were responsible for taking note of the discussion. Faryab is rather remote, has experienced very significant food insecurity, and continues to be affected by drought and severe weather, as well as devastating floods in 2024. The economy in Afghanistan contracted sharply after the withdrawal of international development aid in 2021, and Afghanistan is considered a 'hunger hotspot', of which Faryab is one of the most significantly affected provinces. The nutrition dialogue event was held in World Vision Afghanistan's Faryab zonal office. Participants were divided into four groups, segregating by gender as required by the context, to discuss and share their ideas on three main questions. After 2.5 hours of discussions on food security and several dialogues on nutrition, the workshop was concluded and different ideas were consolidated and shared by the record keepers.

## DISCUSSION

Focusing on three main open-ended questions, conveners, curators, and facilitators ensured that every participant actively engaged and shared their thoughts and opinions, either individually or in group discussions. The main issues discussed by the adult and stakeholder participants included the impact of food insecurity on their lives, their access to nutritious food, and the reasons behind any difficulties in obtaining it. They also explored potential solutions and recommendations to address their needs and reduce the impact of food insecurity, which significantly affects their well-being. o How are you affected by food insecurity? o Are you able to get enough of the right kind of nutritious food your family needs? o What can be done to help people in your community secure enough food? Through group discussions, participants identified key factors and determinants contributing to food insecurity. They outlined recommendations to be considered in future planning, aiming to address these issues effectively. The discussions highlighted the importance of community involvement and the need for targeted interventions to improve access to nutritious food and overall food security.

# SECTION THREE: DIALOGUE OUTCOMES

## CHALLENGES

During discussions among male and female adults respectively, several key challenges related to food insecurity were identified.

- The rate of malnutrition is perceived to have increased among children and pregnant mothers due to inadequate nutrition and poor feeding.
- The weak economy and lack of income-generating opportunities prevent parents from affording and providing nutritious foods for their families.
- Because of the poor economy, many children are sent to work instead of attending school.
- These impacts put parents under pressure, and many families face psychological problems.

Food security challenges discussed in the nutrition dialogue reveal the complex impacts of food insecurity on people's lives, including physical, mental, and social impacts.

Physically, many participants reported malnutrition and related health issues, such as stunted growth in children and increased vulnerability to diseases. Mentally, the constant struggle to secure enough food has led to significant stress, anxiety, and depression among affected individuals. Socially, food insecurity has strained community relationships and forced families to make difficult decisions, such as withdrawing children from school or marrying off young daughters to ensure their survival.

All participants reported that they are struggling with food insecurity. They are facing severe shortages of food and lack the money to buy and provide the basic necessities for their families. The participants emphasized the urgent need for comprehensive solutions to address these challenges and improve their overall well-being.

These discussions highlighted the urgent need for comprehensive solutions to address food insecurity and its multifaceted impacts on the well-being of individuals and communities.

## URGENT ACTIONS

The following main suggestions emerged:

1. Broaden emergency response programmes to provide food and cash assistance to the most vulnerable households.
2. Fund local development projects, especially to support community-led and initiated projects aimed at developing markets for locally produced goods.
3. Conduct resilience awareness and learning programmes, especially those focusing on feeding practices and food security to build community resilience.

Some also suggested that the authorities or NGOs could conduct a large-scale public survey to identify the problems faced by families, and that the authorities should consider job creating infrastructure projects, such as repairing of roads or water supply initiatives in the agricultural sector.

45-year-old woman: "If there were any job for my husband, we would not send our young boy to work. Instead, he would be able to attend school."

30-year-old: "Livestock and agriculture projects, such as gardening, poultry, and sheep farming, can change our lives. If we have an income, we will not remain hungry".

28-year-old woman: "If there were vocational courses such as tailoring and handcraft activities, the women in my village and I could earn some income for our families."

35-year-old man: "Agricultural projects, production factories, and development initiatives should be established so that people can work and provide food for their families."

A 30-year-old woman stated that establishing emergency response centers at the provincial level for basic food distribution is an essential need.

44-year-old woman: "There should be feeding programmes for school children. This would not only reduce hunger but also improve the quality of education."

30-year-old woman: "Women should be supported and empowered to find markets for their products. I think we need more local markets in every village where women can directly sell their handcrafted products. This way, we can earn more money and support our families."

## AREAS OF DIVERGENCE

There were no noticeable areas of divergence in the Faryab dialogue event.

## OVERALL SUMMARY

Participation in the Faryab Nutrition Dialogue was energetic and engaged. Many of the participants in this event are living daily with the challenge of food insecurity, and negative coping mechanisms seemed common among them. While every effort was made to include a diversity of perspectives, our Faryabi participants were strikingly consistent in their accounts of the challenges they face. We are cautious about claiming representativity, but the range of challenges discussed, and the most urgent solutions, seem reflective of accounts from elsewhere describing the impacts of food insecurity on at-risk communities, affecting physical health, mental well-being, and social stability.

Participants shared personal stories that underscored the urgent need for comprehensive solutions to address these challenges.

### Key Recommendations:

1. Broaden emergency response programmes to provide food and cash assistance to the most vulnerable households.
2. Fund local development projects, especially to support community-led and initiated projects aimed at developing markets for locally produced goods.
3. Conduct resilience awareness and learning programmes, especially those focusing on feeding practices and food security to build community resilience.

Some also suggested that the authorities or NGOs could conduct a large-scale public survey to identify the problems faced by families, and that the authorities should consider job creating infrastructure projects, such as repairing of roads or water supply initiatives in the agricultural sector.

### Key quotes:

- 45-year-old woman: "If there were any job for my husband, we would not send our young boy to work. Instead, he would be able to attend school."
- 30-year-old: "Livestock and agriculture projects, such as gardening, poultry, and sheep farming, can change our lives. If we have an income, we will not remain hungry".
- 28-year-old woman: "If there were vocational courses such as tailoring and handcraft activities, the women in my village and I could earn some income for our families."
- 35-year-old man: "Agricultural projects, production factories, and development initiatives should be established so that people can work and provide food for their families."
- A 30-year-old woman stated that establishing emergency response centers at the provincial level for basic food distribution is an essential need.
- 44-year-old woman: "There should be feeding programmes for school children. This would not only reduce hunger but also improve the quality of education."
- 30-year-old woman: "Women should be supported and empowered to find markets for their products. I think we need more local markets in every village where women can directly sell their handcrafted products. This way, we can earn more money and support our families." These recommendations and insights provide a roadmap for addressing food insecurity in the community, emphasizing the importance of immediate relief, sustainable development, food for education.

The following stories were shared:

A 45-year-old mother stated, "When I got married, I never thought my life would become so difficult. My husband lost one of his legs in an accident and is now unable to work. My children and I are working, but we can barely find something to eat at night. My 14-year-old son had to leave school to support the family. Most often, we don't have anything to eat and go to sleep hungry. Due to hunger and not getting proper food, one of my children is malnourished and has a palsy".

A 48-year-old father reported the impact of food insecurity and mental issues on his life: "Our life is not really living; we are just surviving. One of my children is severely malnourished and not growing properly. My neighbour had to marry off his 10-year-old daughter to an older man who is an addict, just to ensure that they could survive. Now my daughter struggles with mental illness."

Another young 30-year-old woman said, "My father died, and my mother is sick but still has to work outside the home. Due to social issues, I am unable to go out and work to earn an income. My sick mother is the only breadwinner, and when I see that we don't have anything to eat, it breaks my heart."

A 33 aged man said, "Food insecurity can cause physical, mental, and psychological problems in the family and even war in the family."

Similarly, a 37-year-old woman mentioned, "I have established a small shop beside my house, but my daily income is only 10-20 Afghani. This amount is not even enough to provide bread for my family".

# SECTION FOUR: PRINCIPLES OF ENGAGEMENT & METHOD

## PRINCIPLES OF ENGAGEMENT

It was essential in Afghanistan to consider the potential for kinship affiliations, power relations, and the restricted environment for expression, to impinge upon the event. Focusing on people who were not already benefiting directly from NGO support was one mitigation, but discussion groups were facilitated with this potential in mind. All participants and facilitators were briefed on the following points, and assented to them in advance of the dialogue event commencing. 1. Give time for everyone to share their ideas. If one of the participants does not participate, ask them for their ideas. 2. Avoid closed questions, complicated concepts, and jargon or slang. 3. Do not ignore the views of any participants. 4. Reflect back participants inputs and seek their approval or amend in response to any objections. Facilitators monitored the discussion, encouraging all participants, especially those who considered themselves illiterate, to express their views and actively take part.

## METHOD AND SETTING

The setting of the Faryab Nutrition Dialogue was the World Vision zonal office in Maimana. This complex comprises a single building in which World Vision staff work, segregated as per the authorities' regulations by gender. Focusing on participants who had no prior engagement with World Vision ensured that this location felt relatively neutral. The key method was focus group discussion with carefully observed and transcribed notetaking.

## ADVICE FOR OTHER CONVENORS

# FEEDBACK FORM: ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

These dialogues were organised and implemented by the World Vision Afghanistan MEAL team, and we acknowledge Naser Abed in particular for his leadership in implementing the Faryab dialogue. We also extend our gratitude to colleagues from World Vision Afghanistan operations and security teams, to our conveners, curators, facilitators, and record keepers for their dedication and hard work in leading the sessions, and to participants for their active engagement.