

OFFICIAL FEEDBACK FORM

WORKSHOP TITLE	World Vision East Africa Region Children's Advisory Group meeting
WORKSHOP DATE	Thursday, 31 October 2024 15:00 GMT +03:00
CONVENED BY	Ruth Koshal, Regional Advocacy and external Engagement Director, World Vision East Africa Event announced on behalf of the Convenor by: William Oticha. I will be offering technical and administrative support to the convenor of the meeting Feedback published on behalf of Convenor by: William Oticha. I offer professional and technical support to the convenors
EVENT LANGUAGE	English
HOST CITY	Nairobi, Kenya
GEOGRAPHIC SCOPE	Eastern Africa- Burundi, Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, Sudan, South Sudan, Somalia, Tanzania, Uganda
AFFILIATIONS	World Vision
WORKSHOP EVENT PAGE	https://nutritiondialogues.org/dialogue/54969/



The outcomes from Children's workshops will contribute to developing and identifying the most urgent and powerful ways to improve nutrition for all, with a focus on children and young people. Each Workshop 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 12-15

0 16-18

PARTICIPATION BY GENDER

0 Female

1 Male

0 Other/Prefer not to say

ADDITIONAL DETAIL ON PARTICIPATION DIVERSITY

The workshop was diverse in several key aspects, First, Children from different countries across East Africa participated, offering a rich blend of perspectives based on their unique experiences and cultural contexts. Both boys and girls from each participating country were included, ensuring that the views and concerns of both genders were captured and considered in the discussions. Lastly, World vision staff, handling child protection issues across different contexts participated.

SECTION TWO: FRAMING

The discussion during the workshop was framed within the broader context of pressing regional issues such as climate change, conflict, and poverty, all of which significantly impact the nutritional well-being of children in East Africa. **Climate Change:** The region is increasingly facing the adverse effects of climate change, including erratic weather patterns, droughts, and floods, which disrupt food production and access. Many areas are experiencing food insecurity, exacerbating the challenges to children's health and nutrition. The impact of climate change has led to malnutrition and stunted growth in vulnerable communities, particularly in rural areas. **Conflict:** Ongoing conflicts in certain parts of East Africa have displaced families, disrupted livelihoods, and led to a lack of access to essential services, including nutrition. Children in conflict zones often face the dual challenge of violence and inadequate food supply, which places them at high risk for malnutrition. **Poverty:** High levels of poverty across the region limit access to quality nutrition. In many areas, families struggle to afford balanced diets, and access to nutritious food is further restricted by economic hardships, making children particularly vulnerable to malnutrition and related health issues. The event, held as part of the Children's Advisory Group, provided a platform for children from different countries to discuss these issues and share their personal experiences. They offered valuable insights into how these broader challenges affect their nutrition and well-being. By involving children in these dialogues, the workshop sought to amplify their voices in shaping policies and interventions aimed at addressing malnutrition in the region. The children's contributions were essential in understanding the local context and identifying practical solutions that can be implemented on the ground.

SECTION THREE: CHILDREN'S WORKSHOP OUTCOMES

CHALLENGES

The participants of the Children's Workshop highlighted several significant nutrition challenges they face, which reflect the broader socio-economic and environmental issues in the region.

In countries like Kenya and Somalia, children reported that the frequent occurrence of natural disasters, such as floods and droughts that disrupt food production and reduce access to safe, nutritious food. These environmental crises lead to food insecurity, as crops are destroyed, and access to clean water becomes limited, further compounding malnutrition issues.

In Uganda, children highlighted the issue of non-nutritious food, such as packed lunches that are often not properly stored and spoil quickly, leading to the consumption of unhealthy or unsafe meals. This is a common issue in schools, where children may receive meals that are not nutritionally balanced, leading to deficiencies in essential vitamins and minerals.

A child representing children from Ethiopia reported a decline in food rations in refugee camps, which are often insufficient to meet their nutritional needs. The child pointed out that as the war rages on, and as refugee camps face overcrowding and limited resources, the food provided is often inadequate, lacking essential nutrients, and sometimes leads to hunger and malnutrition.

Across the region, poverty was cited as a critical barrier to access to adequate nutrition. Children explained that poverty limits the ability of families to afford enough food, let alone nutritious options. This economic hardship results in children not receiving a balanced diet, increasing their vulnerability to malnutrition.

URGENT RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

Education for Parents on Agriculture: Children suggested that governments and NGOs work together to educate parents, particularly in rural areas, on better agricultural practices. This would help improve food production at the household level and ensure that families can grow more nutritious food to feed their children.

Promotion of Irrigation Systems: To combat the effects of erratic rainfall and droughts, children called for governments to invest in and promote irrigation systems. This would help ensure a consistent supply of water for agriculture, particularly in areas prone to droughts.

Ensuring Adequate Food for Refugee Children: Participants highlighted the urgent need for stakeholders, including governments and humanitarian organizations, to ensure that refugee children receive adequate, nutritious food. They emphasized the importance of improving food rations and ensuring that the food provided meets the nutritional requirements of children.

Introduction of School Feeding Programs: Children called for the introduction of school feeding programs to ensure that children receive at least one nutritious meal per day, especially in areas where poverty and food insecurity are prevalent.

AREAS OF DIVERGENCE

The views, opinions, and positions of the children in the workshop diverged slightly due to their differing local realities, shaped by environmental, socio-economic, and political factors. Children from regions facing frequent droughts, like Kenya and Somalia, emphasized the need for irrigation in agriculture while children from countries with refugee children highlighted the need for adequate food rations and the ability to farm their own produce, in contrast to children in more stable communities who proposed initiatives like school feeding programs and promoting local agricultural practices. These variations reflected the unique challenges each community faces, underscoring the importance of tailoring solutions to local contexts while maintaining a shared commitment to addressing food insecurity and malnutrition across the region.

OVERALL SUMMARY

The Children's Workshop provided a platform for children from different East African countries to voice their experiences and perspectives on the pressing issue of nutrition challenges in their communities. The workshop brought together a diverse group of participants, including children from different countries facing both environmental and socio-economic hardships. Through their contributions, several key nutrition challenges were identified, including food insecurity, malnutrition, the impact of natural disasters (such as floods and droughts), poverty, and declining food rations in refugee camps.

The children proposed urgent actions, such as educating parents on better agricultural practices, promoting irrigation systems, ensuring that refugee children receive adequate food, and allowing refugees to farm their own produce. They also advocated for the introduction of school feeding programs and the promotion of school gardens to improve nutrition in schools. The workshop revealed the diverse local realities of the participants, with views and proposals diverging based on the specific challenges faced in their regions, such as climate change, conflict, or poverty.

However, the shared commitment to improving food security and nutritional outcomes for children across the region was evident throughout the discussions. The workshop underscored the importance of context-specific solutions, collaboration among governments, NGOs, and communities, and a comprehensive approach to addressing the root causes of malnutrition and food insecurity.

SECTION FOUR: PRINCIPLES OF ENGAGEMENT & METHOD

PRINCIPLES OF ENGAGEMENT

The Children's Workshop reflected several key aspects of the Principles of Engagement, which guide the way stakeholders should interact with children. **Child Participation:** The workshop was designed to give children a platform to express their own views, experiences, and ideas. **Non-Discrimination:** The workshop emphasized the inclusion of children from diverse backgrounds, including those from rural areas and conflict-affected regions. **Best Interests:** All discussions and proposed actions in the workshop were framed around improving the well-being and nutrition of children. Throughout the workshop, the children were encouraged to engage openly, sharing their concerns about the challenges they face and the actions they believe are needed.

METHOD AND SETTING

The methodology used to convene the Children's Workshop involved a participatory approach that prioritized child engagement, inclusion, and empowerment. The workshop was designed to actively involve children in discussions, ensuring their voices were central to the conversation. For a start, all children participated with parental consent and under the guidance of a chaperone from world vision. the workshop was held online and interpretation provided for children who did not speak English.

ADVICE FOR OTHER CONVENORS

Provide ample time for the children to participate. Ensure they understand the mission and provide a welcoming environment for their views.

FEEDBACK FORM: ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

World Vision East Africa Regional Office would like to thank all the participants in the dialogue, all the children who made time to attend and the entire support team from the field offices that made the engagement seamless.

ATTACHMENTS

- **Meeting notes. WV EAR Children Nutrition Dialogue**
<https://nutritiondialogues.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/12/Meeting-notes-WV-EA-Children-Advisory-group-10-24-1.docx>