

# OFFICIAL FEEDBACK FORM

<b>DIALOGUE TITLE</b>	ACCELERATING SUSTAINABLE AND INCLUSIVE FOOD SYSTEMS FOR ALL: A call for improved coordination and Collective Responsibility!
<b>DIALOGUE DATE</b>	Friday, 6 December 2024 11:00 GMT +02:00
<b>CONVENED BY</b>	Joseph Gausi, National Coordinator, Civil Society organisations Nutrition Alliance
<b>EVENT LANGUAGE</b>	English
<b>HOST LOCATION</b>	Lilongwe, Malawi
<b>GEOGRAPHIC SCOPE</b>	Lilongwe, National Level
<b>AFFILIATIONS</b>	CSONA is affiliated to the Scaling Up Nutrition Civil Society Movement and is also working with World Vision Malawi on enough campaign. This event was initiated through our affiliation and linkage with the SUN CSN
<b>DIALOGUE EVENT PAGE</b>	<a href="https://nutritiondialogues.org/dialogue/55114/">https://nutritiondialogues.org/dialogue/55114/</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

45

## PARTICIPATION BY AGE RANGE

0	0-11	0	12-18	9	19-29
31	30-49	5	50-74	0	75+

## PARTICIPATION BY GENDER

15	Female	30	Male	0	Other/Prefer not to say
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## NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS FROM EACH STAKEHOLDER GROUP

5	Children, Youth Groups and Students	21	Civil Society Organisations (including consumer groups and environmental organisations)
0	Educators and Teachers	0	Faith Leaders/Faith Communities
2	Financial Institutions and Technical Partners	0	Food Producers (including farmers)
5	Healthcare Professionals	0	Indigenous Peoples
0	Information and Technology Providers	0	Large Business and Food Retailers
0	Marketing and Advertising Experts	3	National/Federal Government Officials and Representatives
3	News and Media (e.g. Journalists)	0	Parents and Caregivers
0	Science and Academia	0	Small/Medium Enterprises
4	Sub-National/Local Government Officials and Representatives	1	United Nations
1	Women's Groups	0	Other (please state)

## OTHER STAKEHOLDER GROUPS

## ADDITIONAL DETAIL ON PARTICIPANT DIVERSITY

There was diversity of participation as participants were drawn from the district level and from national level. Participants at national level were largely from the national Civil Society Organisations, the officers from Ministry of Agriculture, Health, Education and local government. These are mostly the technocrats who provided technical know how and support officers at district and sub national level. Representatives from the district constituted the representatives of youth, women and CSO

# SECTION TWO: FRAMING AND DISCUSSION

## FRAMING

The introduction was done by representatives of Director in ministry of Agriculture in Malawi. Being the designated convener of the food systems, they provided a picture of the status of the country on fast tracking the transformation agenda on the food systems. The officials presented progress so far made on food systems which includes the national dialogues which culminated into the production of the national food systems synthesis report and the investment plan. So far government explained that there has been a lack of commitment and coordination challenges were very prevalent as the different agencies of government are failing to find best ways of coordinating and harmonizing how to move together with every stakeholder working on the food systems transformation. The facilitator also hinted that the dialogue will focus on a number of relevant topics which aim to highlight the various issues that affect nutrition outcomes in Malawi. The facilitator arranged that participants are drawn to different groups to discuss these issues. The Topics under discussion were as follows : A. Food Systems Coordination B. Nutrition for Growth Commitments C. Private Sector Involvement in Food Systems D. Fortification in Food Value Chains E. Monitoring and Evaluation in Food Systems

## NUTRITION SITUATION PRESENTATION

<https://nutritiondialogues.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/12/NUTRITION-DIALOGUES-TOPICS-FOR-DISCUSSION-1.pdf>

## DISCUSSION

A. Food Systems Coordination Objective: Examine the strengths and weaknesses in coordination at district and national levels, and identify opportunities to strengthen these systems for greater impact. Discussion Questions: 1. Introduction and Context (15 minutes): o What does "coordination in food systems" mean in the Malawian context? o What are the key roles of stakeholders at community, district and national levels in ensuring effective food systems coordination? 2. Current State Assessment (20 minutes): o What are the strengths in food systems coordination at the district level? National level? Community level? o What are the common weaknesses or gaps in coordination? o How has the lack of coordination impacted food security or nutrition outcomes in Malawi? 3. Exploring Opportunities (20 minutes): o What successful coordination models can we learn from (locally or internationally)? o How can we align coordination efforts across agriculture, health, education, and private sectors? o What role can technology and data sharing play in improving coordination? 4. Solutions and Recommendations (20 minutes): o What practical steps can stakeholders take to improve district-level coordination? National-level coordination? o What mechanisms can be put in place to ensure sustained collaboration among stakeholders? o How can we ensure that local voices are represented in national strategies for food systems coordination? B. Nutrition for Growth Commitments Objective: Critically assess how Malawi is turning its Nutrition for Growth (N4G) commitments into actionable outcomes and identify gaps and accountability mechanisms. Discussion Questions: 1. Understanding Commitments (15 minutes) o What are the specific N4G commitments Malawi has pledged? o How do these commitments align with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and national nutrition strategies? 2. Assessing Progress (20 minutes) o What progress has been made in fulfilling the N4G commitments

# SECTION THREE: DIALOGUE OUTCOMES

## CHALLENGES

The following challenges were observed during the dialogues

1. Most participants expressed limited knowledge on a number of nutrition commitments that are made by the government due to low public awareness of the same.
2. The challenge of coordination between various agencies of the government in the implementation of high level policy commitments that are made by the executives which do not trickle down to the junior officials on the ground.
3. The county had been hit with climate change impact such as droughts, heavy and destructive rainfall, cyclones and other challenges that have impacted nutrition challenges and the limited preparedness to make communities resilient from such disasters
4. Lack of data and reliable M and E Systems in the implementation of nutrition was also seen as a serious challenge. It was noted that research to provide reliable data on nutrition statistics has not been done since 2015/6 and that the available data was not sufficient to guide proper implementation of programs.
5. Lack of clear leadership on the food systems agenda was limiting progress since 2021 as the coordination machinery in the ministry of agriculture is hardly accepted across all sectors

## URGENT ACTIONS

some of the actions proposed from participants include the following :

1. in terms of nutrition commitments the participants observed the need to share them among all government sectors to create ownership among key stakeholders that have a role in ensuring that these are fulfilled on the domestic context. for example, the commitment made by government to increase nutrition budgetary allocation of the district budget to 5% was difficult because others agencies such as district officials and the National Local Government Financing Committee was not aware of these commitments.
2. on the M and E systems participants noted that it is key to promote sharing of data so that there could be improvements in the implementation of nutrition programs
3. on the challenges on food systems coordination, the participants proposed the need to lobby for government to assign the role of coordination in the office of the president or the national planning commission as the two institutions have overarching mandate on each institutions
4. on making fresh nutrition for growth commitments, the participants were of the view that instead of making unrealistic commitments, the government should only ensure that new commitments are relevant and reflect the view of wider stakeholder.

## AREAS OF DIVERGENCE

based on the topics discussed there wasn't much divergence as the issues were real and most of the participants were in unison with the gaps mentioned and proposed solutions to the tackle key issues.

## OVERALL SUMMARY

Overall, the nutrition dialogues that Malawi conducted was successful. What caused the success was the diversity of the topics that were brought to the table which were relevant to the needs of the country. Participants deliberated on key topics such as 1) food systems coordination 2) Nutrition for growth Commitments 3) Fortification in value chains, 4) private sector involvement in food systems and 5) Monitoring and Evaluation in Food Systems.

participants were drawn from among diverse stakeholders which included the youth, women, CSOs, government representatives from Agriculture and Nutrition including media personalities. These provided a good landscape of opinion on the topics presented and helped to provide a general overview of the current landscape of nutrition issues.

the dialogues unveiled that while as the country we are moved forward the food systems transformation there are still serious bottlenecks that are potentially holding back progress on nutrition indicators these challenges centre on poor coordination within the food systems as the key sectors do not recognise the leadership as they both have line ministry mandate unlike coordination mandate as possessed by the Office of the president and Cabinet.

on Nutrition for Growth, It was observed that out of the 11 nutrition for Growth Commitments, Malawi had only achieved 4 of the commitments partially and that there is need to be realistic when making such commitments in future.

on the participation, we noted that some groups such as the private sector did not attend despite being invited and some groups from the districts were unable to attend due to budget constraints to include them in the dialogues.

# SECTION FOUR: PRINCIPLES OF ENGAGEMENT & METHOD

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## PRINCIPLES OF ENGAGEMENT

we used facilitators from CSONA communications department who understood the assignment and delivered the dialogues without being paid. They underwent the guidance provided in the portal

## METHOD AND SETTING

we used a dialogue session format that used round table discussion. we had the welcome remarks from government who set the stage for the dialogues, then we had predesigned topics and questions for 5 groups, each group had a maximum of 8 participants. the group discussed the issues for 90 minutes and after the groups the presentation was done for 40 minutes with each group taking 10 minutes. after the plenary an exchange was done among key participants. Closing was done by National coordinator

## ADVICE FOR OTHER CONVENORS

Try to diversify participants and prepare guiding notes as much as possible

# FEEDBACK FORM: ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

CSONA would like to acknowledge our supporters who enabled the dialogue to be a possibility. specifically the Scaling Up Nutrition CSN and GIZ Malawi for co financing the event. many regards to all who came to be part of dialogues