

OFFICIAL FEEDBACK FORM

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| DIALOGUE TITLE | Engaging Faith Leaders for Nutrition Action: An Enough Campaign Dialogue |
| DIALOGUE DATE | Wednesday, 27 August 2025 09:00 GMT +08:00 |
| CONVENED BY | Christle Grace Cubelo, Health and Nutrition Technical Program Manager, World Vision Development Foundation |
| EVENT LANGUAGE | Filipino/English |
| HOST LOCATION | Bulan, Philippines |
| GEOGRAPHIC SCOPE | Bulan, Sorsogon, Philippines |
| AFFILIATIONS | World Vision Enough Campaign |
| DIALOGUE EVENT PAGE | https://nutritiondialogues.org/dialogue/55238/ |



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 | 13 |
|------------------------------|----|

PARTICIPATION BY AGE RANGE

| | | | | | |
|---|-------|---|-------|---|-------|
| 0 | 0-11 | 0 | 12-18 | 2 | 19-29 |
| 4 | 30-49 | 7 | 50-74 | 0 | 75+ |

PARTICIPATION BY GENDER

| | | | | | |
|----|--------|---|------|---|-------------------------|
| 10 | Female | 3 | Male | 0 | Other/Prefer not to say |
|----|--------|---|------|---|-------------------------|

NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS FROM EACH STAKEHOLDER GROUP

| | | | |
|---|---|----|---|
| 0 | Children, Youth Groups and Students | 1 | Civil Society Organisations (including consumer groups and environmental organisations) |
| 0 | Educators and Teachers | 13 | 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

ADDITIONAL DETAIL ON PARTICIPANT DIVERSITY

This Nutrition Dialogue, conducted under the Enough Campaign, forms part of a series of dialogues held across the Philippines. Previous sessions have engaged diverse stakeholders, including children, government agencies, and civil society organizations. This particular Dialogue centered on faith-based leaders in a rural community, highlighting the vital role of faith sectors in promoting nutrition and community well-being.

SECTION TWO: FRAMING AND DISCUSSION

FRAMING

The Stakeholder Dialogue was framed around the current nutrition and food security situation in the Philippines, with a particular focus on the regional context of the participants. Discussions also highlighted the long-term impacts of malnutrition in the country, emphasizing the need for sustained and coordinated actions to address the problem. Recognizing that addressing malnutrition requires a whole-of-society approach, the Dialogue engaged faith-based leaders as influential community actors who can shape values, beliefs, and behaviors related to food security and nutrition. It provided a platform to examine the spiritual, social, and cultural barriers that prevent families—particularly those with malnourished children—from accessing nutritious food, and to identify faith-consistent actions that can help promote proper nutrition practices.

DISCUSSION

The group discussion focused on three main questions that guided the dialogue: 1) What are the nutrition challenges in your community? 2) What urgent actions are needed? 3) What are possible areas of convergence and divergence?

SECTION THREE: DIALOGUE OUTCOMES

CHALLENGES

- 1) Poverty and Financial Constraints
Families are forced to rely on cheap, low-nutrient foods such as noodles, hotdogs, and eggs. In some barangays, parents' vices like gambling or drinking lead to neglect of children's needs, with some children working as early as age 10 in fish processing to buy food. Daily incomes of Php 400-500 are barely enough for three meals, especially with high costs of food and clean water.
- 2) Parental Attitudes and Behavior
Some parents do not maximize available land for gardening, prioritize socializing or vices, or lack knowledge on balanced nutrition. Busy schedules, convenience, and lack of supervision also lead to frequent consumption of instant or fried foods.
- 3) Children's Eating Habits and Preferences
Many children are picky eaters and accustomed to eating "chichiria" or junk foods, fast foods, and street snacks, influenced by peers and the easy availability of unhealthy options, even in schools.
- 4) Systemic and Social Issues
Identified issues are teenage pregnancy, family problems, and limited health-seeking behavior. Participants noted that some government aid programs, while helpful, are sometimes misused or foster dependence rather than self-sufficiency. Concerns were raised about food safety and questionable chemicals and GMO use in food production, perceived as leading to early maturation among children. The community also faces food wastage, particularly in fish products, due to lack of storage and processing facilities.
- 5) Challenges in church and school-based feeding programs
Children's food preferences, lack of nutrition expertise, and limited monitoring make it difficult to ensure long-term improvements.

URGENT ACTIONS

- 1) Education and Awareness programs
Participants emphasized the urgent need for information campaigns and parental education on proper nutrition, meal planning, and food budgeting. Parents must learn to prepare balanced meals with local ingredients and creatively include vegetables in children's diets. Moral Recovery Programs should be revived in schools and barangays to instill values, discipline, and responsible decision-making, particularly among youth. Training children early to appreciate nutritious foods and limit sweets was also highlighted.
- 2) National and Local Government Actions
Local governments were urged to strengthen backyard gardening initiatives and livelihood programs to promote food security and economic resilience. Existing programs like 4Ps must be monitored to ensure funds reach intended beneficiaries. Policies regulating the sale of unhealthy food near schools should be enforced. Participants also called for better food waste management, such as using "lawlaw" fish surplus for processing, and closer coordination between DOH and values-based advocates to harmonize reproductive health messaging.
- 3) Church Actions
Churches can be vital partners in nutrition promotion by aligning with barangays and health centers in feeding programs, sharing data, and accessing technical support from nutrition experts. Regular monitoring and follow-up with families should be practiced to sustain improvements. Church-led efforts can also engage parents through practical cooking lessons and teachings on stewardship—linking faith with healthy living and responsible consumption.
- 4) Family and Parental Actions
Parents were encouraged to be intentional in providing nutritious meals, manage finances wisely, supervise children's food intake, and develop health-seeking behavior through regular check-ups, not only when illness occurs.

AREAS OF DIVERGENCE

- Areas of Convergence (Collaboration):
- o Education and Awareness: There is a consensus that churches, barangays, and LGUs should collaborate on information dissemination and educational programs for families on nutrition.
 - o Feeding Programs: Churches and health centers can collaborate on feeding programs, with health centers providing technical expertise, data (e.g., children's weights), and potentially micronutrient supplementation, while churches provide the logistical support.
 - o Moral Recovery Program (MRP): The MRP serves as an existing area of convergence, bringing together churches, schools, and LGUs to address holistic well-being, including health and responsible choices.
 - o Family Life Development Programs: These programs can serve as platforms for multi-sectoral discussions on hunger, malnutrition, and food security.
 - o Food Waste Management: There's potential for churches and LGUs to collaborate on addressing the oversupply of fish (like "lawlaw") through processing, storage, and distribution to prevent waste and utilize it for food security or livelihood.

- Areas of Divergence (Conflict/Different Approaches):
- o Messaging on Reproductive Health and Sex Education: A significant point of divergence is the conflicting messaging between the DOH and faith-based organizations regarding sex education. The faith leaders believe that the government is promoting "safe sex" by distributing condoms. For them, this is "provoking" youth and encouraging premarital sex (resulting to teenage pregnancy). Faith leaders advocate for "abstinence" and the sanctity of marriage.

OVERALL SUMMARY

Malnutrition and hunger are multifaceted problems arising from a complex interplay of economic hardship, parental neglect due to vices, lack of knowledge or limited time, children's growing preference for unhealthy foods, and gaps in governance and social support. Addressing these challenges requires a multi-sectoral and collaborative approach that actively involves government agencies, local communities, schools, and faith-based organizations.

Education and awareness are paramount for both parents and children to cultivate healthy eating habits, balanced nutrition, and a proactive approach toward health. While financial aid is necessary, sustainable livelihood programs and the responsible management of government assistance is essential to economically empower families and prevent long-term dependency.

Churches play a vital role. Their feeding programs could be made more impactful through the integration of technical expertise, robust monitoring, and engagement of parents to ensure long-term nutritional improvements.

Bridging the gap in messaging on sensitive topics such as reproductive health between government and faith leaders is crucial to prevent confusion and ensure a cohesive approach to youth development.

Lastly, communities can maximize untapped local resources and opportunities, such as the oversupply of "lawlaw" fish, which with proper planning and collaboration, could significantly contribute to food security and economic empowerment.

SECTION FOUR: PRINCIPLES OF ENGAGEMENT & METHOD

PRINCIPLES OF ENGAGEMENT

The Dialogue followed the Nutrition Dialogue Principles of Engagement, ensuring a respectful, inclusive, and meaningful exchange among participants. It emphasized collective commitment to improving nutrition for all, especially women and children, and recognized that nutrition is influenced by multiple factors. The session promoted openness, learning, and trust while upholding integrity, equity, and human rights. It was conducted with urgency and safeguarded from any form of product marketing or promotion.

METHOD AND SETTING

The activity was held in a function room of a local restaurant in Bulan, Sorsogon. It was designed as an informal roundtable discussion with faith-based leaders. Facilitators guided participants through structured questions that encouraged reflection, sharing of experiences, and collective brainstorming.

ADVICE FOR OTHER CONVENORS

FEEDBACK FORM: ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We would like to express our sincere gratitude to World Vision South Asia and the Pacific Regional Office - Faith and Development Unit for sponsoring this event. Special thanks to Desmond Lim for his coordination and support in making this activity possible.

ATTACHMENTS

- **Nutrition Dialogue with Faith Leaders - Documentation**
<https://nutritiondialogues.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/10/Philippines-Nutrition-Dialogue-Documentation-1.pdf>