

OFFICIAL FEEDBACK FORM

WORKSHOP TITLE	Nutrition Dialogue with Children in Watawala Area Programme, Sri Lanka
WORKSHOP DATE	Friday, 22 November 2024 14:30 GMT +05:30
CONVENED BY	Lavanya Suriyakumar- National Campaign Manager, World Vision Lanka
EVENT LANGUAGE	Tamil
HOST CITY	Watawala, Sri Lanka
GEOGRAPHIC SCOPE	Watawala Area programme-World Vision Lanka
AFFILIATIONS	Watawala Area programme- World Vision Lanka- Impact plus club children
WORKSHOP EVENT PAGE	https://nutritiondialogues.org/dialogue/55503/



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

15

PARTICIPATION BY AGE RANGE

13 12-15

2 16-18

PARTICIPATION BY GENDER

12 Female

3 Male

0 Other/Prefer not to say

ADDITIONAL DETAIL ON PARTICIPATION DIVERSITY

The children who participated are from tea plantation communities in Sri Lanka. These communities have a long history of being brought from India by colonial rulers, which has led to a systematic disadvantage over the years. The children are of various ages but mostly from the same social strata. They are part of Impact Plus clubs, which train adolescents in life skills under children societies.

SECTION TWO: FRAMING

The facilitator began by introducing herself and explaining the purpose of the discussion. As an icebreaker, the children shared their names, where they are from, and their favourite food, which helped create a friendly atmosphere. The concept of nutritional dialogues, how they would proceed, and the children's contributions were discussed in a relaxed manner. Some statistics from the latest Nutritional Month report were shared to spark brainstorming among the participants.

SECTION THREE: CHILDREN'S WORKSHOP OUTCOMES

CHALLENGES

1. Discontent with Traditional Food: Many people are increasingly dissatisfied with traditional food options, finding them less appealing compared to modern alternatives.
2. Preference for Fast Food: There is a growing attraction towards fast food due to its convenience, taste, and marketing appeal.
3. Children's Food Choices: Children often choose food based on taste, color, and smell, which can lead to poor nutrition and malnourishment.
4. Rise in Non-Communicable Diseases: The consumption of fast food is contributing to an increase in non-communicable diseases such as obesity, diabetes, and heart disease.
5. Undernourished School Children: Many school children are undernourished due to the lack of adequate school meal programs.
6. Impact of Parental Income: Financial struggles of parents often result in children not receiving the right nutrition.
7. Difficulty Accessing Fruits: There are challenges in accessing fresh fruits, which are essential for a balanced diet.
8. Lack of Interest in Home Gardening: Despite having space, many households show little interest in home gardening, missing out on the benefits of growing their own fresh produce.
9. Too much of wheat flour consumption per day.

URGENT RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

1. Incorporate Traditional Foods Daily: Ensure that traditional foods are included in daily meals to preserve cultural heritage and promote balanced nutrition.
2. Innovative Home Gardening Techniques: Introduce new and appealing home gardening methods to encourage more households to grow their own produce.
3. Reduce Food Waste: Implement strategies to minimize food wastage, ensuring that resources are used efficiently and sustainably.
4. Promote Fresh Fruit Drinks: Encourage the consumption of fresh fruit juices instead of sugary soft drinks to improve overall health. (Especially king coconut, lemon)
5. Nutrition Education for Parents and Caregivers: Provide education on child nutrition to parents and caregivers, helping them make informed dietary choices for children of all ages.

AREAS OF DIVERGENCE

We need to cut down on fast food and eat more traditional food. However, this is tough because fast food is tasty, convenient, and popular. People won't switch back to traditional, nutritious food unless we make a strong case for it.

OVERALL SUMMARY

It was a valuable opportunity for the children to discuss nutrition issues and solutions in plantation communities, especially since they come from a district (Nuwara Eliya District) with the highest rate of underweight children under five in the country. The children were aware of both internal and external factors affecting their nutrition. They eagerly shared their thoughts on nutrition, recognizing that change must begin with them. They emphasized that "to ensure a nutritious life, it is essential to shape our behaviors and attitudes from childhood." Key food practices are crucial in reducing malnourishment among children. They view the fast-food culture as a significant threat and acknowledge that they are not utilizing available resources to improve their nutrition.

"I would love to have a home garden at my house. I enjoy watering it and taking care of it without adult help. Currently, I have a small garden with some green leaves," said a 15-year-old girl from the group.

The children also highlighted the food choices made by parents and caregivers, expressing that they feel they have little control over these decisions.

SECTION FOUR: PRINCIPLES OF ENGAGEMENT & METHOD

PRINCIPLES OF ENGAGEMENT

All the children were encouraged to convey their ideas. Talking about the photographs activity made them think and talk a lot. Children gave very unique perspectives on nutrition. One of the boys (12 years) said "Food that children consume must be tasty, if it is not tasty, we will not have it no matter how nutritious it is." All the children gave their inputs for the collage and had productive discussions before coming to conclusion. Few children preferred to talk few preferred to write, therefore having couple of activities that involved writing and talking made all the children convey their ideas in a way that they enjoy.

METHOD AND SETTING

Venue: The workshop was held at a preschool, a familiar place for the children as they usually gather there for child club meetings. This familiarity helped them feel comfortable and engaged. Nutritional refreshments were provided at the beginning of the workshop, as the children were hungry after their tuition classes. This gave them time to settle down while enjoying their snacks. The seating was arranged in a circle to ensure everyone could see each other when sharing their opinions.

ADVICE FOR OTHER CONVENORS

When conducting the consultation, it's important to consider the weather, as it can impact both attendance and participation levels. Due to heavy rain, we had to wait for the children to arrive on time, and it took some time for everyone to settle down. It's also beneficial to start the session after providing refreshments, as some children may not have had their meals on time.

FEEDBACK FORM: ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We would like to express our gratitude to World Vision Lanka's Area Programmes and the community volunteers for organizing the workshop despite the adverse weather conditions caused by a cyclone in Sri Lanka. Additionally, the feedback forms were prepared in the local language to ensure accurate and unfiltered responses. At the National office, we translated these documents into English.

ATTACHMENTS

- **Child sharing her opinions on nutrition based on a photograph she chose**
<https://nutritiondialogues.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/12/Image-6-scaled.jpg>
- **The collage made by the children**
<https://nutritiondialogues.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/12/Image-22.jpg>
- **Children sharing the issues of nutrition in their village through sticky notes**
<https://nutritiondialogues.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/12/Image-16.jpg>
- **Children working in the group**
<https://nutritiondialogues.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/12/Image-15-scaled.jpg>
- **Children making the collage together**
<https://nutritiondialogues.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/12/Image-22-1.jpg>
- **Children getting ready for the workshop**
<https://nutritiondialogues.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/12/Image-3.jpg>
- **One of the boy child sharing his view on mothers' nutrition**
<https://nutritiondialogues.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/12/Image-8-scaled.jpg>
- **National Nutrition month report-2024-Sri Lanka**
<https://nutritiondialogues.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/12/National-Nutrition-Month-Summary-Report-2024.pdf>