

# OFFICIAL FEEDBACK FORM

<b>DIALOGUE TITLE</b>	The Nutrition Nexus: Connecting people, ideas, and solutions
<b>DIALOGUE DATE</b>	Monday, 2 December 2024 08:30 GMT +03:00
<b>CONVENED BY</b>	Edgar Onyango, National coordinator, SUN CSA Kenya Event announced on behalf of the Convenor by: Charlyne Kirui. To provide professional expertise, technical support, managing logistics, and ensuring smooth facilitation to help achieve the goals of the nutrition dialogue.
<b>EVENT LANGUAGE</b>	English
<b>HOST LOCATION</b>	Kiambu, Kenya
<b>GEOGRAPHIC SCOPE</b>	County level
<b>AFFILIATIONS</b>	Scaling up Nutrition, civil society Alliance (SUN CSA)
<b>DIALOGUE EVENT PAGE</b>	<a href="https://nutritiondialogues.org/dialogue/55610/">https://nutritiondialogues.org/dialogue/55610/</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

10

## PARTICIPATION BY AGE RANGE

0	0-11	0	12-18	3	19-29
5	30-49	2	50-74	0	75+

## PARTICIPATION BY GENDER

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

## OTHER STAKEHOLDER GROUPS

N/A

## ADDITIONAL DETAIL ON PARTICIPANT DIVERSITY

Our dialogue event prioritized inclusivity by engaging participants from diverse backgrounds. It included individuals from various economic classes, ensuring representation from low-income to affluent groups. Efforts were made to involve both urban and rural residents, ensuring balanced perspectives from different geographical settings. Technical county staff facilitated discussions, emphasizing equity and equal participation to address varying community needs effectively.

# SECTION TWO: FRAMING AND DISCUSSION

## FRAMING

The stakeholder dialogue event was framed to address critical local challenges affecting nutrition, including poverty, climate change, and malnutrition-related risk factors. The introduction emphasized the county's nutrition situation, highlighting key issues such as widespread micronutrient deficiencies, food insecurity, and the effects of seasonal variations on food availability. Technical county staff provided context on the prevalence of malnutrition risk factors like pollution, inadequate sanitation, and the impacts of climate-related shocks on agricultural productivity. Local anxieties were also addressed, including the rising cost of nutritious food, disparities in access to health services, and the vulnerability of specific groups, such as children under five and pregnant women. By drawing on detailed local data, the introduction fostered a shared understanding of the urgent need for multi-sectoral solutions. Participants were encouraged to reflect on how social and economic inequalities, combined with urbanization and rural challenges, influence nutrition outcomes. The framing underscored the importance of collaborative efforts to create sustainable, community-driven strategies that prioritize equitable access to nutrition and resilience against emerging challenges.

## DISCUSSION

Our discussion focused on key nutrition-related challenges and solutions. Open-ended questions included: 1. What are the main barriers to accessing nutritious food in the community? 2. How can we enhance community awareness and education on nutrition? 3. What role do seasonality and climate change play in food insecurity here? 4. How can we ensure inclusive policies that address inequalities in nutrition and healthcare access? 5. What capacity-building efforts are needed to empower communities for sustainable nutrition improvement?

# SECTION THREE: DIALOGUE OUTCOMES

## CHALLENGES

The participants face significant nutrition-related challenges and gaps, impacting overall community well-being:

- 1. Poor Health and Sanitation Practices (WASH):** High rates of diarrheal diseases stem from inadequate water, sanitation, and hygiene practices, contributing to malnutrition and poor health.
- 2. Neglect of People Living with Disabilities (PWDs):** Nutrition and health programs often fail to include PWDs, leaving a vulnerable group underserved.
- 3. Unregulated Daycare Centers:** Many daycare facilities operate without regulation, leading to substandard childcare and nutrition for young children.
- 4. Human Resource Deficiencies:** Critical shortages in personnel, including Community Health Promoters (CHPs) and agricultural extension workers, limit the reach and effectiveness of health and nutrition programs.
- 5. Inadequate Nutritional Supplements:** There is insufficient availability of essential supplements such as RUTF, RUSF, and FBF, vital for addressing severe malnutrition in children.
- 6. Socioeconomic Challenges:** Poverty and limited access to resources hinder households' ability to secure nutritious food and meet other basic needs.
- 7. Substance Abuse:** Rising substance abuse, especially among youth, exacerbates health and nutrition challenges in the community.
- 8. Food Security Challenges:** There are minimal efforts to promote food security initiatives, such as household kitchen gardens, which could improve access to fresh, nutritious foods.
- 9. Contradictory Data:** Discrepancies between facility-level and community-level data hinder accurate decision-making, delaying targeted interventions.

Addressing these gaps requires coordinated efforts, including improved WASH practices, inclusive policies for PWDs, regulation of daycare facilities, increased health personnel, enhanced access to nutritional supplements, and socioeconomic empowerment. Community-driven strategies and food security programs like kitchen gardens are crucial to building resilience.

## URGENT ACTIONS

The technical staff identified several urgent actions to address the community's nutrition-related challenges and proposed measures to ensure their effective implementation:

### 1. Capacity Building for CHPs:

Focus CHPs' training on community nutrition, equipping them with the skills to address nutrition challenges holistically rather than solely through clinical approaches.

Recruit and deploy more CHPs to enhance outreach and service delivery, particularly in underserved areas.

### 2. Training and Regulation of Daycare Centers:

Conduct training for daycare operators on essential WASH practices and appropriate child feeding methods to promote better health outcomes.

Develop and enforce regulations to ensure daycare centers adhere to acceptable childcare and nutrition standards.

### 3. Policies on Food Fortification:

Advocate for the implementation of policies promoting food fortification to enhance the nutritional value of staple foods and address widespread nutrient deficiencies.

### 4. Promotion of Self-Help Groups:

Sensitize the community on the value of self-help groups as platforms for mutual support, skill sharing, and capacity building in health and nutrition practices.

### 5. Kitchen Garden Models:

Establish a demonstration kitchen garden at Makongeni Health Center to showcase best practices and encourage households to adopt similar food security initiatives.

## AREAS OF DIVERGENCE

Views, opinions, and positions diverged significantly on several key issues during the dialogue:

1. **Intervention Priorities:** While some participants emphasized the urgency of addressing WASH (water, sanitation, and hygiene) challenges to reduce disease prevalence, others prioritized ensuring consistent availability of nutritional supplements like RUTF, RUSF, and FBF for malnourished children.

2. **Resource Allocation:** There were differing opinions on how resources should be distributed between immediate nutrition interventions and long-term solutions like capacity building for CHPs or promoting household kitchen gardens.

3. **Role of Stakeholders:** Participants disagreed on the roles and responsibilities of different stakeholders, with some advocating for government-led initiatives and others emphasizing the importance of community-driven approaches or partnerships with NGOs.

4. **Regulation of Daycare Centers:** Opinions varied on how strictly daycare centers should be regulated. Some participants called for stringent enforcement of standards, while others cautioned that overly strict measures might hinder access to daycare services in rural areas.

5. **Approaches to Food Security:** Divergences arose regarding food security strategies, with some favoring large-scale agricultural initiatives and others supporting localized, household-level solutions like kitchen gardens.

6. **Data Harmonization:** There was debate over the best methodologies for reconciling health facility data with community-level data. Some participants argued for improved technology and tools, while others highlighted the need for better coordination and capacity building among data collectors.

7. **Community Engagement:** The extent of community involvement in decision-making processes was another point of divergence, with some advocating for a top-down approach and others stressing the need for grassroots participation.

## OVERALL SUMMARY

The dialogue was a dynamic and inclusive platform that brought together stakeholders from diverse sectors to address the pressing nutrition challenges facing the community. The event was characterized by constructive engagement, collaboration, and a shared commitment to finding sustainable solutions to improve nutrition outcomes. Participants included representatives from government agencies, community-based organizations, technical experts, and community members, ensuring a wide range of perspectives and insights.

The discussions were grounded in the local context, with a particular focus on issues such as poverty, food insecurity, malnutrition, and the impacts of climate change on agriculture and health. Participants openly shared their experiences, challenges, and aspirations, creating a vibrant atmosphere of mutual respect and collective problem-solving.

Key Themes Discussed:

### 1. Nutrition Challenges:

The dialogue explored key nutrition challenges, including poor WASH practices, the neglect of vulnerable groups like PWDs, inadequate regulation of daycare centers, human resource gaps in health and agriculture, limited availability of nutritional supplements, and rising substance abuse among youth.

### 2. Proposed Solutions:

Participants identified actionable solutions, such as capacity building for CHPs, advocating for food fortification policies, promoting self-help groups, establishing kitchen garden models, and ensuring consistent availability of nutritional supplements. Mechanisms for harmonizing health and community-level data were also proposed to improve decision-making processes.

### 3. Stakeholder Collaboration:

The event emphasized the importance of multi-sectoral collaboration, with stakeholders recognizing the need for coordinated efforts between government, NGOs, and community groups to address complex nutrition issues effectively.

Atmosphere and Engagement:

The event was characterized by a sense of urgency and purpose, reflecting the participants' shared desire to make a tangible impact on community nutrition. The atmosphere was both engaging and solution-oriented, with stakeholders demonstrating a willingness to listen, learn, and adapt their perspectives to achieve common goals.

The dialogue also fostered a spirit of empowerment among community representatives, who were encouraged to voice their concerns and contribute to shaping interventions. Participants appreciated the platform as an opportunity to bridge gaps in communication and align efforts for greater impact.

Key Takeaways:

There is a strong need for inclusive, community-driven approaches that prioritize the most vulnerable populations, including PWDs and malnourished children.

Addressing gaps in human resources, especially CHPs, is critical for enhancing service delivery at the community level.

Promoting household-level food security initiatives, such as kitchen gardens, can build resilience and improve access to fresh, nutritious foods.

Effective regulation and training for daycare centers are essential to ensure proper childcare and nutrition practices.

Collaboration between stakeholders is essential for sustainable solutions, and this dialogue set a strong foundation for continued partnership.

Overall Experience:

From my perspective, the event felt highly productive and impactful. It was inspiring to witness the level of dedication and collaboration among participants, and the genuine commitment to addressing the community's nutrition challenges. The dialogue generated actionable recommendations but also created a sense of shared responsibility and accountability.

Looking ahead, this dialogue will be crucial in informing strategies for the Nutrition for Growth summit in March 2025. The discussions and outcomes reflect the community's aspirations and serve as a valuable foundation for driving progress in nutrition and health at both the local and national levels.

# SECTION FOUR: PRINCIPLES OF ENGAGEMENT & METHOD

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## PRINCIPLES OF ENGAGEMENT

The dialogue reflected key principles of engagement, such as inclusivity, transparency, and collaboration. Prior to the event, we briefed facilitators about the participants' list to anticipate potential areas of competing interests, especially regarding stakeholder roles, resource allocation, and policy priorities. This proactive approach helped ensure smooth facilitation by addressing potential conflicts before they arose. One key area of competing interests was the balance between short-term interventions and long-term solutions. Some participants advocated for immediate action, such as distributing nutritional supplements, while others focused on sustainable, community-driven initiatives like promoting kitchen gardens and improving local food security. The facilitators navigated these discussions by encouraging dialogue and finding common ground, ensuring that both perspectives were considered in the proposed solutions.

## METHOD AND SETTING

The dialogue was convened using a structured yet interactive methodology, incorporating both presentations and facilitated discussions. We followed a participatory approach, encouraging input from all stakeholders to ensure diverse perspectives were included. The setting was formal, held within a conference room at a local facility in Kiambu County. The setting supported both collaborative and structured exchanges.

## ADVICE FOR OTHER CONVENORS

For convening an action dialogue event for technical staff, it's crucial to create a clear agenda that aligns with the participants' expertise and areas of focus. Start by clearly defining the objectives and expected outcomes to ensure all participants are aligned on the purpose. Before the event, engage in briefings with facilitators to discuss potential areas of conflict and challenges. Incorporate a mix of structured presentations and interactive discussions to keep participants engaged.

# FEEDBACK FORM: ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to Kiambu County, County Nutrition Coordinators, and County Community Focal Persons for their invaluable support and collaboration. Our appreciation also goes to World Vision for leading the Nutrition Dialogue initiative together with the 4SD Foundation. Finally, we sincerely thank our funders, SUN CSN for their generous contributions, which have made this initiative possible.