

OFFICIAL FEEDBACK FORM

DIALOGUE TITLE	The Nutrition Nexus: Connecting people, ideas, and solutions
DIALOGUE DATE	Thursday, 5 December 2024 08:30 GMT +03:00
CONVENED BY	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 Feedback published on behalf of Convenor by: Charlyne Kirui. To provide professional expertise, technical support, and logistical assistance to ensure the nutrition dialogue is well-organized, inclusive and impactful.
EVENT LANGUAGE	English
HOST LOCATION	Bomet, Kenya
GEOGRAPHIC SCOPE	County Level
AFFILIATIONS	SUN CSA
DIALOGUE EVENT PAGE	https://nutritiondialogues.org/dialogue/55621/



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

20

PARTICIPATION BY AGE RANGE

0	0-11	0	12-18	2	19-29
17	30-49	1	50-74	0	75+

PARTICIPATION BY GENDER

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

OTHER STAKEHOLDER GROUPS

N/A

ADDITIONAL DETAIL ON PARTICIPANT DIVERSITY

Our dialogue event in Bomet County was highly diverse, bringing together participants from varied backgrounds. These included social service workers addressing gender issues, agricultural professionals supporting rural livelihoods, ECD practitioners, teachers, parents, and health workers focused on community wellness. This diversity bridged wealth, ethnicity, and geographic divides, incorporating perspectives from both urban and rural areas.

SECTION TWO: FRAMING AND DISCUSSION

FRAMING

The stakeholder dialogue event was framed with an introduction highlighting the local context and pressing nutrition issues in the community. The discussion began by addressing prevalent concerns, such as the high rates of malnutrition driven by seasonal food shortages, environmental challenges like pollution, and limited access to nutritious foods. Key risk factors were emphasized, including poverty, inadequate health services, and a lack of nutrition education. Participants were informed of widespread deficiencies in essential nutrients like iron, vitamin A, and protein, significantly impacting children's growth and maternal health. The introduction aimed to ground the conversation in shared local experiences, fostering a sense of urgency and collaboration to address these challenges comprehensively. This context set the stage for productive, solution-oriented discussions.

DISCUSSION

Our discussion centered on critical challenges affecting nutrition and health. Open-ended questions explored issues faced by various sectors, including access to essential supplies like diapers and nutrition commodities, as highlighted by a pharmacist. Delays in delivery from KEMSA were also discussed. Other topics included poor nutrition education, gaps in policy implementation, and barriers to accessing healthy food. Participants reflected on systemic inefficiencies and shared insights on improving supply chains, education, and policy frameworks to address these pressing concerns collaboratively.

SECTION THREE: DIALOGUE OUTCOMES

CHALLENGES

Participants in the dialogue highlighted several nutrition challenges affecting the community. For pregnant and breastfeeding mothers, a lack of awareness about the importance of exclusive breastfeeding was a major concern, compounded by irregular visits to clinic facilities. Negligence toward vulnerable groups, including women, persons with disabilities, and survivors of gender-based violence, was also discussed, alongside the prevalence of early pregnancies that further strain maternal and child nutrition.

In the agricultural sector, the dominance of tea farming poses a significant challenge, as it limits land availability for crop diversification, reducing access to varied, nutrient-rich foods. These interconnected issues highlight systemic barriers to achieving better nutrition outcomes, underscoring the need for targeted education, improved healthcare access, and policy changes to support vulnerable groups and promote agricultural diversity.

URGENT ACTIONS

Participants identified several urgent actions to address the nutrition challenges discussed. Empowering Community Health Promoters (CHPs) was emphasized as a critical step in strengthening grassroots efforts. Promoting agricultural diversification and encouraging kitchen gardens were proposed to improve household access to nutritious foods and reduce reliance on single cash crops like tea.

Health education for antenatal and breastfeeding mothers was deemed essential, focusing on the importance of exclusive breastfeeding and maternal nutrition. Participants also stressed the need for field visits to engage directly with women, persons with disabilities, and survivors of gender-based violence, addressing their unique needs and barriers.

Additionally, monitoring and evaluating policies and advocating for the Facility Improvement Fund Bill were highlighted as priorities to ensure effective implementation and resource allocation. These actions would foster sustainable, community-driven solutions to nutrition challenges.

AREAS OF DIVERGENCE

During the dialogue, views and opinions diverged on several issues, reflecting varied perspectives across sectors and community roles. Some participants believed the lack of nutrition education was the primary barrier, emphasizing the need for widespread health education campaigns targeting antenatal and breastfeeding mothers. Others argued that systemic issues, such as delays in commodity delivery and gaps in policy implementation, were more pressing and required structural reform.

There were differing views on agricultural solutions as well. While some advocated for promoting kitchen gardens and small-scale farming for local food production, others felt that economic reliance on cash crops like tea was necessary for community livelihoods, despite its impact on crop diversity.

Disparities also emerged in addressing vulnerable populations. Some felt direct engagement through field visits was critical, while others emphasized strengthening institutional frameworks to address the broader social determinants of nutrition. These differing positions highlighted the need for a balanced approach combining education, systemic reforms, and community empowerment.

OVERALL SUMMARY

The stakeholder dialogue in Bomet County provided a vital platform for diverse community voices to come together and address pressing nutrition challenges. The event brought together social service workers, agricultural professionals, health workers, educators, parents, and individuals from marginalized groups, including persons with disabilities and survivors of gender-based violence. This inclusivity enriched the dialogue with varied perspectives, fostering a collective understanding of the local context and shared challenges.

The discussions highlighted several urgent issues. Participants expressed concerns over the lack of awareness around exclusive breastfeeding, irregular clinic visits among antenatal and breastfeeding mothers, and widespread nutrition deficiencies. Vulnerable groups, such as women, persons with disabilities, and victims of gender-based violence, were noted to face significant barriers to accessing adequate nutrition and health services. Early pregnancies were also identified as a contributing factor to poor maternal and child nutrition outcomes. In the agricultural sector, participants raised the dominance of tea farming, which limits land for food crop diversification, as a major challenge.

The atmosphere of the dialogue was dynamic and solution-oriented. Despite the challenges, there was a strong sense of commitment and collaboration among participants. The discussions were marked by an openness to share personal and professional insights, creating an environment where practical solutions could emerge.

Several actions were identified as urgent and actionable. Empowering Community Health Promoters (CHPs) to educate and support households on nutrition and health was a top priority. Promoting agricultural diversification and encouraging kitchen gardens were proposed as practical measures to improve household food security and access to nutrient-rich foods. Participants also emphasized the need for health education targeting antenatal and breastfeeding mothers, with a focus on exclusive breastfeeding and maternal nutrition. Direct field visits to engage with women, persons with disabilities, and survivors of gender-based violence were recommended to address their unique needs and challenges.

Additionally, there was consensus on the importance of monitoring and evaluating existing policies, such as the Facility Improvement Fund Bill, to ensure they translate into tangible benefits for communities. Addressing systemic inefficiencies, such as delays in commodity delivery and gaps in policy implementation, was also recognized as crucial for achieving long-term progress.

The dialogue was not without differences in opinion. For example, some participants prioritized education and awareness campaigns, while others emphasized structural reforms and institutional strengthening. Divergences also arose regarding solutions to agricultural challenges, with some advocating for local food production through kitchen gardens and others stressing the economic necessity of cash crops like tea. These differences highlighted the complexity of the issues and the need for a multi-faceted approach.

Overall, the event was characterized by a spirit of collaboration, hope, and determination to improve nutrition outcomes in Bomet County. It underscored the importance of engaging diverse stakeholders to develop sustainable solutions tailored to local realities. The dialogue laid a strong foundation for continued collaboration and action, with a shared commitment to addressing nutrition challenges ahead of the Nutrition for Growth summit in March 2025.

SECTION FOUR: PRINCIPLES OF ENGAGEMENT & METHOD

PRINCIPLES OF ENGAGEMENT

The dialogue in Bomet County closely adhered to key principles of engagement, including inclusivity, transparency, and collaboration. We ensured diverse representation by carefully selecting participants from various sectors, including healthcare, agriculture, education, and marginalized groups. Before the event, facilitators briefed participants on potential competing interests, such as differing views on agricultural priorities or resource allocation, to foster an environment of respectful dialogue and constructive debate. To manage these competing interests, facilitators were trained to guide discussions impartially and ensure all voices were heard. We also implemented financial disclosure requirements to promote transparency, particularly in discussions about funding allocation for nutrition programs. This ensured that all participants were aware of any potential conflicts of interest and that decisions could be made with full knowledge of any external influences.

METHOD AND SETTING

The dialogue with county technical staff was held at the Office of the Governor in Konoin Sub County, in a small hall designed to foster intimate, focused discussions. Chairs were arranged in a circular formation to facilitate one-on-one interactions, ensuring a collaborative and engaging atmosphere. The methodology followed a participatory approach, encouraging active involvement from all attendees.

ADVICE FOR OTHER CONVENORS

For other convenors, it's essential to create an inclusive and open environment where all participants feel heard and valued. Before the event, brief facilitators on potential competing interests and ensure everyone understands the agenda and objectives. Focus on clear communication, and setting ground rules to maintain respect during discussions. Be mindful of the different sectors involved and the unique perspectives they bring. Lastly, ensure follow-up actions are clearly outlined.

FEEDBACK FORM: ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to Bomet 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 for their generous contributions, which have made this initiative possible. Your collective efforts and dedication are instrumental in advancing sustainable solutions.