

OFFICIAL FEEDBACK FORM

WORKSHOP TITLE	Empowering Children Voices in nutrition: Building Healthier communities
WORKSHOP DATE	Tuesday, 3 December 2024 14:00 GMT +02:00
CONVENED BY	Edna Principal HIV & AIDS Nutrition Officer, Chikondi Magombo Food and Nutrition Officer, Joseph Kanyangala School Healthth and NutritiON Officer Event announced on behalf of the Convenor by: Lizzie Lombe. Coordinating and technical suport Feedback published on behalf of Convenor by: Lizzie Lombe. Coordinating and providing technical support
EVENT LANGUAGE	Chichewa
GEOGRAPHIC SCOPE	Chigodi Assemblies of God Church in Chimwaye Village, TA Mazengera , Lilongwe
AFFILIATIONS	World Vision
WORKSHOP EVENT PAGE	https://nutritiondialogues.org/dialogue/55857/

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

1

PARTICIPATION BY AGE RANGE

11 12-15

4 16-18

PARTICIPATION BY GENDER

11 Female

4 Male

0 Other/Prefer not to say

ADDITIONAL DETAIL ON PARTICIPATION DIVERSITY

The participants were a diverse group of children aged 12 to 18, including both boys and girls from the same community. They represented a mix of school-going including and children with disabilities. From the 15 participants, 3 were children with various forms of disabilities (1 with visual impairment and 2 with speech challenges). The workshop was held in a rural area, focusing on some of the most vulnerable children. All participants were from Chimwaye community in Lilongwe.

SECTION TWO: FRAMING

A roundtable setup was arranged followed by introductions. The facilitator mentioned the objective of the nutrition dialogue. Key terms, "hunger" and "malnutrition" were introduced, and the children were invited to define what hunger means to them. To set a positive tone, a song titled "Moyo wa Thanzi Ndi Deal" meaning "Good Health is Good" was played, and the children enjoyed dancing along. This led into a discussion about the importance of meals containing all six food groups. The children were encouraged to illustrate their favourite meals or foods through drawings. To maintain high energy levels, we played a game called "To Whom Does It Belong?" Afterwards, the children were divided into groups to discuss the causes of hunger and malnutrition and brainstorm possible solutions. Finally, they shared personal experiences with hunger reflecting on its impact on their lives and communities.

SECTION THREE: CHILDREN'S WORKSHOP OUTCOMES

CHALLENGES

- Selling of land by parents which reduces the area available for farming, limiting the production of food for family consumption and income generation.
- Our parents lack farm inputs which leads to low crop yield", said one girl child
- Early child marriages are creating additional financial and food challenges,one child shared, "There is a family in my community that grows food but has poor harvests. This forces children to engage in risky behaviors and 1 girl got married at a young age."
- Families are selling farm produce leaving little for household consumption which leads to food shortages. Most of the foods sold include soya bean and groundnuts
- Cutting down of trees are leading to soil degradation and reduced rainfall affecting agricultural productivity and food availability.
- Scarcity of fruit trees in most of our homes
- Polygamy after harvest: "In my community, there is a family that usually produces enough food. This past growing season, they harvested 50 bags of maize, and the plan was to sell the maize to buy farm inputs for the next season. However, the man sold all the maize and married another wife instead.",one child narrated.

URGENT RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

- Engage local leaders to advocate against unnecessary land sales.
- Promote planting and replanting of fruit trees.
- Raise awareness about the six food groups and their importance plus how to prepare some nutritious meals using the food supplies found in the community
- Conduct educational campaigns to end child marriages.
- Provide family planning education to communities so that there are not many children in families.
- Encourage the use of compost manure for sustainable agriculture.
- Facilitate parental access to loans for easier procurement of fertilizers.

AREAS OF DIVERGENCE

Children understand the issues of nutrition and hunger and the consequences these have on their lives. However, we observed that they have limited knowledge about food diversity which was addressed through additional discussions. They also had diverse views around what they as children could do to contribute towards ending child hunger and malnutrition. Some said they will inform their parents about what they learnt in the discussions while other children said they will themselves start planting fruit trees, encourage parents to rear small animals.

OVERALL SUMMARY

The dialogue session provided a chance to understand children's perspectives on nutrition and hunger. The discussions revealed that while the children are aware of the importance of proper nourishment, they also highlighted hunger as a major challenge in their community. This issue affects dietary diversity and may contribute to high rates of malnutrition. Regular nutrition dialogues should be organized and expanded to other communities which may help NGOs and government programs to address these challenges. The children were also very happy that they were involved in this issue. They felt very happy and made some commitments to do something as children in addressing child malnutrition.

SECTION FOUR: PRINCIPLES OF ENGAGEMENT & METHOD

PRINCIPLES OF ENGAGEMENT

Before the workshop began, we ensured that each child was willing to participate voluntarily, assuring them that our role was simply to listen to their ideas without any form of evaluation. The conveners and facilitators established a safe space where children could express themselves freely not to influence their responses.

METHOD AND SETTING

Venue: Church (selected to provide a comfortable environment with enough space for the children) The session began with introductions, followed by an explanation of the workshop's goals and a brief energizer activity to engage participants before starting the discussion. Consent forms were completed prior to the event.

ADVICE FOR OTHER CONVENORS

- Facilitators should clearly establish the foundation of the dialogue by explaining the meeting agenda and the purpose of participants' involvement.
- They should also incorporate energizers throughout the discussions to keep everyone engaged and active.

FEEDBACK FORM: ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Acknowledgements go to the Lilongwe District Council, and the Ministries of Health, Education, and Agriculture for collaborating to engage children on issues of hunger and malnutrition.

RELEVANT LINKS

- **documentation online**
<https://africabrief.substack.com/p/hunger-haunts-rural-malawi-children>

CORRECTIONS, ADJUSTMENTS, OR CHANGES

Title Adding some group photos

Date 16/12/2024

Array

ATTACHMENTS

- **action group photo**
<https://nutritiondialogues.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/12/LW-2.jpg>
- **action group photo**
<https://nutritiondialogues.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/12/LW-5-4.jpg>
- **action group photo**
<https://nutritiondialogues.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/12/LW-3.jpg>