

OFFICIAL FEEDBACK FORM

WORKSHOP TITLE	Ending Hunger Together - A collaborative effort towards ending malnutrition
WORKSHOP DATE	Friday, 6 December 2024 14:00 GMT +02:00
CONVENED BY	Alex Mandiza, Senior Health Surveillance Assistant, Malawi Government Event announced on behalf of the Convenor by: Yamikani Banda. Technical Support Feedback published on behalf of Convenor by: Yamikani Banda. Technical Support
EVENT LANGUAGE	Chichewa
HOST CITY	Mkonkha Trading Centre, Malawi
GEOGRAPHIC SCOPE	Community Level
AFFILIATIONS	World Vision International
WORKSHOP EVENT PAGE	https://nutritiondialogues.org/dialogue/55951/



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

15 12-15

0 16-18

PARTICIPATION BY GENDER

8 Female

7 Male

0 Other/Prefer not to say

ADDITIONAL DETAIL ON PARTICIPATION DIVERSITY

The workshop was inclusive, involving children from diverse socio-economic backgrounds, including those from low-income and middle-income households. Efforts were made to ensure children with disabilities were included, One child with albinism participated with accommodations provided to support their active participation. The workshop brought children largely from rural setting

SECTION TWO: FRAMING

The workshop was framed to suit child friendly environment where games formed part of the discussions. In breaking the ice, introductions were done using an activity where children were asked to write the food that would represent their identity and how they would feel if that was not available in their homes. This was done to draw children's attention about the discussion that were to be done focused on food and nutrition. After that, children started discussing key issues with regards to nutrition and how challenges about nutrition affect them. Possible workable solutions were discussed in groups and ideas presented. Call to action points were noted during the discussion.

SECTION THREE: CHILDREN'S WORKSHOP OUTCOMES

CHALLENGES

1. Climate change was one of the key issues that were presented. Children were able to notice how households struggled to harvest last growing season as a result of El Nino. This has resulted in the District where these children come from to be categorized as a District under crisis of food insecurity.
2. Irresponsible parents who sell all the harvest and use money for things that do not matter like beer leaving the household in dire poverty. This affects children as they do not have food to eat at their homes.
3. Poverty and economic hardships: Despite the fact that some parents try their best to cultivate crops, children have decried rising cost of production of staple foods. With the economic crisis, prices for farm inputs have skyrocketed making it hard for smallholder farmers to buy inputs for cultivation of enough food for the household. As a result, households do not have enough food to feed the family throughout the year.
4. Children's school attendance and concentration in school is affected negatively as they cannot eat on an empty stomach. This is exacerbated by lack of school feeding programs in the schools. No school where the children were coming from provide school meals.
5. Lack of knowledge on how to produce balanced diet using locally available resources and over reliance of one staple food (maize) leading to children suffering from malnutrition due to lack of proper diet thereby affecting their day to day life including .

URGENT RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

Children requested the following to be done urgently:

1. Rolling out of school meals to reduce the effects of child hunger and malnutrition amongst children.
2. Planting of trees as a mitigating measure for climate change. Children pledged to engage school authorities to provide them with fruit trees and they will plant for a double effect (climate change and fruits for nutrition).
3. Civic education community members on how to make balanced diet using locally available food.

AREAS OF DIVERGENCE

There were no specific area of divergence that were noted during the session.

OVERALL SUMMARY

The workshop aimed to get first hand information from children on how child hunger, malnutrition and food insecurity affect them and what they would wish to happen for these challenges to be addressed.

The session was conducted in a classroom setting, ensuring a safe and familiar environment for the participants. The session used diverse methodologies such as games, drawings, group work, demonstrations, and songs to make the session engaging and interactive. Chichewa which is local language and widely spoken was used for participants to engage freely without challenges. The session ensured inclusivity by including one child with albinism who was given equal opportunity to engage like any other child. Parental and children's consent was obtained voluntarily, fostering trust and cooperation.

Children demonstrated an understanding of hunger, malnutrition and food insecurity and how these are linked. They were able to demonstrate that these issues exist in their communities and shared their own experiences. They highlighted concerns such as post-harvest food insecurity caused by the sale of agricultural produce, limited dietary diversity, and the absence of school feeding programs. Risk factors like climate change, which disrupts agricultural production, and cultural practices that hinder balanced diets were also discussed.

A key focus of the workshop was on the six food groups. Children actively participated by identifying examples of locally available foods in each group. This activity reinforced their understanding and also emphasized the importance of utilizing locally sourced foods to improve nutrition.

The session also provided a platform for children to voice their concerns and propose solutions. They expressed frustration over food insecurity in their homes, often caused by poor post-harvest management or economic pressures. Laziness in some households was cited as a barrier to food security. Additionally, the lack of school feeding programs was a recurring theme, with participants urging the government and stakeholders to implement such initiatives in all schools.

From the facilitator's perspective, the workshop was vibrant and engaging. The children were enthusiastic and eager to share their thoughts, which created a lively and collaborative atmosphere. The use of participatory methods helped build their confidence and ensured that every child, regardless of their background, had a chance to contribute. The diversity of participants, including children with disabilities enriched the discussions and fostered a sense of unity among children.

The event also shed light on the importance of addressing systemic issues. For example, the discussion on food insecurity underscored the need for community-level interventions to promote sustainable agricultural practices and equitable food distribution. Similarly, the emphasis on school feeding programs highlighted the role of education in improving nutrition outcomes.

In conclusion, the workshop successfully achieved its objectives by surfacing critical issues related to nutrition, enhancing children's knowledge, and empowering them to advocate for solutions. It also demonstrated the potential of participatory approaches in engaging children as active contributors to discussions about their health and well-being. Moving forward, the insights gathered from this workshop can inform policies and programs aimed at combating malnutrition and ensuring that every child has access to nutritious food.

SECTION FOUR: PRINCIPLES OF ENGAGEMENT & METHOD

PRINCIPLES OF ENGAGEMENT

The workshop fostered trust and mutual respect by creating a safe space for children to share their perspectives openly. Participants were encouraged to learn from each other through interactive activities such as group work, games, and discussions. Integrity and ethical conduct were upheld by obtaining voluntary consent from both parents and children and by ensuring that the event remained free from the marketing or promotion of any products. Inclusion and Diversity were key as evidenced by inclusion of a child with disability and allowing them to participate freely.

METHOD AND SETTING

The workshop used participatory methods, including games, drawings, songs, group work, and demonstrations, to ensure active engagement. Held in a classroom at the children's school, it provided a safe and familiar environment. Child safeguarding standards were upheld by obtaining informed consent from parents and children, using age-appropriate activities, and ensuring inclusivity, including for children with disabilities. The local language was used to promote understanding and participation.

ADVICE FOR OTHER CONVENORS

1. Use child-friendly methods to ensure active engagement. 2. Hold the workshop in a safe, familiar venue, such as a school, and use the local language for inclusivity. 3. Ensure diversity by including children from various backgrounds and accommodating those with disabilities. 4. Foster a supportive environment where children feel comfortable sharing ideas and participating in discussions about nutrition challenges and solutions

FEEDBACK FORM: ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

1. World Vision Malawi for mobilizing participants who voluntarily participated 2. Parents and children for allowing participation.

RELEVANT LINKS

- **Malnutrition, a challenge that needs urgent action**
<https://www.capitalradiomalawi.com/2024/12/14/food-insecurity-hits-mchinji-learners-hard/>