

OFFICIAL FEEDBACK FORM

DIALOGUE TITLE	Learning & Reflecting about Nutrition
DIALOGUE DATE	Tuesday, 17 December 2024 11:30 GMT +01:00
CONVENED BY	World Vision Angola Event announced on behalf of the Convenor by: Nidia Klein. Organiser Feedback published on behalf of Convenor by: Nidia Klein. Technical Suport
EVENT LANGUAGE	Portuguese
HOST LOCATION	Luanda, Angola
GEOGRAPHIC SCOPE	Community level
DIALOGUE EVENT PAGE	https://nutritiondialogues.org/dialogue/56454/



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

8

PARTICIPATION BY AGE RANGE

0	0-11	0	12-18	1	19-29
6	30-49	1	50-74	0	75+

PARTICIPATION BY GENDER

5	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	4	Civil Society Organisations (including consumer groups and environmental organisations)
0	Educators and Teachers	0	Faith Leaders/Faith Communities
0	Financial Institutions and Technical Partners	0	Food Producers (including farmers)
0	Healthcare Professionals	0	Indigenous Peoples
0	Information and Technology Providers	0	Large Business and Food Retailers
0	Marketing and Advertising Experts	0	National/Federal Government Officials and Representatives
0	News and Media (e.g. Journalists)	1	Parents and Caregivers
0	Science and Academia	0	Small/Medium Enterprises
0	Sub-National/Local Government Officials and Representatives	0	United Nations
3	Women's Groups	1	Other (please state)

OTHER STAKEHOLDER GROUPS

N/A

ADDITIONAL DETAIL ON PARTICIPANT DIVERSITY

The participants work in various professions such as cleaners, social mobilizers, administrators, accountants, and engineers, representing Angola's different social strata. Most said they live with their families and have children, while a minority do not have children and live alone. The majority of participants are in the age group of 30-49 years and consider themselves economically balanced. The participants live in urban areas in the capital, but in neighborhoods with different contexts.

SECTION TWO: FRAMING AND DISCUSSION

FRAMING

Participants were introduced to the concepts of nutrition and malnutrition, as well as global nutrition statistics and child malnutrition rates. Data specific to Angola were also presented, showing that 43.6% of children have stunted growth and 11.8% of those living in rural areas suffer from low weight (SOFI, FAO 2023). Another statistic highlighted that 88% of the Angolan population does not have access to an adequate diet. Existing government policies in the country that aim to ensure access to healthy and nutritious food for the entire population were also discussed.

NUTRITION SITUATION PRESENTATION

<https://nutritiondialogues.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/12/FOME-E-MALNUTRICA0-INFANTIL-EM-ANGOLA-1.pdf>

DISCUSSION

The discussion used topics suggested in the reference manual about what is desired for the future (In three years...) and was guided by questions about what participants would like to see changed in terms of nutrition in their community. Participants were also encouraged to talk about school meals, whether they attended a school that offered them, how food was handled when they were in school, and how they think it influenced their development.

SECTION THREE: DIALOGUE OUTCOMES

CHALLENGES

The nutritional challenges identified in the community mainly involve the lack of access to diverse and quality foods. Participants recognize that the country is promoting local agriculture, but still in small steps, and as a result, most food still arrives through imports. Many families consume the same meals every day, based on corn and cassava flour, without nutrient variation, which provides a poor sense of satiety but leads to malnutrition among children, especially in rural areas. Additionally, the poor implementation of existing public policies or the lack of more effective policies to ensure the quality of what is produced in the country, along with limited infrastructure for the distribution and commercialization of locally produced food, make it difficult to access nutritious foods.

Another critical point recognized by the participants is the extreme poverty experienced by most of the population, which prevents families from acquiring basic foods, highlighting a cycle of food deprivation and economic difficulties. There are also challenges related to the lack of time to prepare healthy meals, especially among women who juggle domestic and professional roles. The very high price of food is another barrier preventing Angolan families from accessing a greater variety of food. Regarding children, there was mention of the high consumption of processed foods with a lot of sugar. The fact that school meals are not equally distributed and guaranteed by the government throughout the country was also a point of concern raised by the participants.

URGENT ACTIONS

To address the nutritional challenges, the group believes that the Angolan government must first recognize the depth of the hunger problem in the country, as the president has so far stated that hunger is relative among the Angolan population. It is urgent to implement public policies that encourage and facilitate local and family agricultural and industrial food production, promoting dietary variation and diversification. Community organization is essential to establish efficient production chains, allowing small producers to transport and market their products sustainably.

At the same time, nutritional education programs should be developed to raise awareness at all levels about the importance of a balanced diet. Support from NGOs, churches, and local groups is also necessary, as they can create solidarity initiatives such as maintaining community gardens in schools and neighborhoods and school meal programs, ensuring continuous access to quality food. Small individual actions, such as food contributions and adopting vulnerable families, can be effective in the short term but should be aligned with long-term strategies with government support. Another point raised by the participants is that the government, in this time of economic crisis, should institute a fixed price table for basic food items to ensure access to a minimally acceptable balanced diet without being too burdensome for everyone in society.

AREAS OF DIVERGENCE

There is a general consensus on the need for structural changes to ensure adequate nutrition, highlighting the role of public policies, local production, and community organization. All participants share a concern about malnutrition and believe that small actions can make a difference. However, there are differing views on the time needed to achieve significant improvements. While some maintain a more optimistic outlook, believing in changes within a shorter timeframe, others have a more realistic perspective and believe that transformations will take several decades, as they mainly involve changing structures and behaviors not only of politicians but also of the population, in terms of accessing information about what constitutes a healthy diet.

Personal experiences also influence opinions on the effectiveness of short-term aid versus more sustainable solutions. While some participants agree that daily dietary diversification is necessary, others still insist that consuming porridge with some sauce would be sufficient for daily nourishment, and the opinions reflected the different social levels present among the group.

OVERALL SUMMARY

The participants, who come from various professions such as cleaners, social mobilizers, administrators, accountants, and engineers, represent different social strata of Angola. Most live with their families and have children, while a minority are childless and live alone. The majority are aged 30-49 and consider themselves economically stable. Younger participants showed more optimism for change, while older ones felt resigned to the current situation of hunger and malnutrition in the country.

The discussion was guided by topics from a reference manual on future aspirations (In three years...) and included questions about desired changes in community nutrition. Participants were encouraged to talk about school meals, their experiences with school-provided meals, and how these influenced their development.

The identified nutritional challenges in the community mainly involve the lack of access to diverse and quality foods. Participants acknowledged that the country is promoting local agriculture, but progress is slow, and most food is still imported. Many families consume the same meals daily, based on cornmeal and cassava, leading to a lack of nutrient variety and resulting in malnutrition, especially among children in rural areas. Additionally, the poor implementation of existing public policies or the lack of more effective policies to ensure the quality of locally produced food, along with limited distribution infrastructure, hinders access to nutritious foods.

Extreme poverty, which prevents families from acquiring basic foods, creates a cycle of food deprivation and economic difficulties. There are also challenges related to the lack of time for preparing healthy meals, especially among women who juggle domestic and professional roles. The high cost of food is another barrier to greater dietary diversity for Angolan families. Regarding children, there is a high consumption of processed foods with high sugar content. The unequal distribution and lack of government-guaranteed school meals across the country were also points of concern raised by participants.

To address nutritional challenges, the group believes it is essential for the Angolan government to recognize the severity of the hunger problem, as the president currently states that hunger is relative among the Angolan population. Urgent implementation of public policies that encourage and facilitate local and family agricultural and industrial food production, promoting dietary diversity, is needed. Community organization is crucial to establish efficient production chains, allowing small producers to transport and sell their products sustainably. Concurrently, nutritional education programs should be developed to raise community awareness at all levels about the importance of a balanced diet.

Support from NGOs, churches, and local groups is also necessary to create solidarity initiatives, such as maintaining community gardens in schools and neighborhoods and school meal programs, ensuring continuous access to quality food. Small individual actions, like food contributions and adopting vulnerable families, can be effective in the short term but should align with long-term strategies supported by the government. Another suggestion from participants was for the government to establish fixed prices for basic food items during the economic crisis to ensure access to a minimally acceptable balanced diet without being too burdensome for society.

There is a general consensus on the need for structural changes to ensure adequate nutrition, highlighting the role of public policies, local production, and community organization. Some maintain an optimistic view, believing in changes within a shorter timeframe, while others have a more realistic perspective, believing that transformations will take several decades, as they involve changing structures and behaviors not only of politicians but also of the population, in terms of accessing information about what constitutes a healthy diet. Personal experiences also influence opinions on the effectiveness of short-term aid versus more sustainable solutions. While some participants agree on the need for daily dietary diversification, others still believe that consuming porridge with some sauce is sufficient for daily nourishment, reflecting the different social levels present in the group.

SECTION FOUR: PRINCIPLES OF ENGAGEMENT & METHOD

PRINCIPLES OF ENGAGEMENT

During the meeting, participants had access to snacks prepared especially for the event and raised the issue that, due to their intense work and personal routines, they often prefer quick and processed snacks, with little preference for fruits and vegetables in general.

METHOD AND SETTING

We organized the meeting in a roundtable format. Each participant gave a brief introduction with their name, profession, and neighborhood where they live. We started the dialogue by asking open-ended questions and presenting concepts and information about the global and local nutrition context. We then asked participants to reflect on these concepts in connection with the realities they live in.

ADVICE FOR OTHER CONVENORS

It is important for the facilitator to engage all participants to express themselves and to have other supporting materials, such as photos, for example, to spark further discussions and stimulate debate among the participants, so that contributions are not limited to just answering the questions asked.

FEEDBACK FORM: ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We would like to thank the national office of World Vision Angola for providing the space for us to hold the dialogue and the participants who readily agreed to be part of the event.