

OFFICIAL FEEDBACK FORM

WORKSHOP TITLE	Little Leaders, Big Impact: Shaping the Future of Global Nutrition
WORKSHOP DATE	Friday, 27 December 2024 09:00 GMT +05:00
CONVENED BY	Faiz Rasool, Head of Policy & Advocacy, Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition (GAIN)
EVENT LANGUAGE	English & Urdu
HOST CITY	Lahore, Pakistan
GEOGRAPHIC SCOPE	Lahore, Punjab, Pakistan
AFFILIATIONS	Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition (GAIN)
WORKSHOP EVENT PAGE	https://nutritiondialogues.org/dialogue/57032/



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

34

PARTICIPATION BY AGE RANGE

11 12-15

23 16-18

PARTICIPATION BY GENDER

16 Female

18 Male

0 Other/Prefer not to say

ADDITIONAL DETAIL ON PARTICIPATION DIVERSITY

A total of 34 participants, aged 12 to 18 years, were selected from government and private schools, colleges, and universities, ensuring diverse representation. Institutions included UET, UVAS, Punjab School, LGS, and others. Participants came from urban elite institutions, middle-class government schools, and orphaned children on scholarships, representing a rural-urban mix across Punjab. Nominations were made by department heads and teachers, prioritizing diversity.

SECTION TWO: FRAMING

The workshop was framed to address Pakistan's pressing nutrition challenges while creating an interactive and inclusive environment. It began with an engaging icebreaker activity, "Networking Bingo," encouraging participants to connect, communicate, and build trust. This lively exercise set the stage for productive discussions by fostering collaboration and active engagement. Participants were then divided into diverse groups representing varied genders, age ranges, and socio-economic backgrounds, ensuring inclusivity. These groups discussed foundational topics like food safety, malnutrition, stunting, wasting, and obesity, contextualized within Pakistan's alarming nutrition landscape. For example, 40.2% of children under five are stunted, 17.7% experience wasting, and 41.3% of women aged 15-49 suffer from anaemia, exacerbated by widespread poverty. This workshop aligned with the global Nutrition for Growth (N4G) Summit, emphasizing the role of youth in combating malnutrition through advocacy, innovation, and actionable grassroots solutions. Participants were inspired to view themselves as contributors to global nutrition efforts, linking local insights to international goals. This framing highlighted the importance of youth-led initiatives and multi-sectoral collaboration in achieving sustainable nutrition outcomes. The workshop inspired Participants to take ownership of nutrition challenges, demonstrating how their voices can influence policies and actions at both the national and international levels.

SECTION THREE: CHILDREN'S WORKSHOP OUTCOMES

CHALLENGES

Through interactive discussions and visual exploration activities, participants identified numerous challenges contributing to the prevalence of malnutrition, highlighting both systemic and localized issues. One of the foremost challenges identified was the lack of awareness and education about nutrition, particularly in rural areas where access to reliable information is limited. This lack of knowledge often results in poor dietary choices and an inability to address nutritional deficiencies effectively.

Economic factors, including inflation and widespread economic crises, were also seen as major contributors to food insecurity. These issues lead to higher food prices, making nutritious food inaccessible to large segments of the population. Additionally, inefficiencies in supply chains and rampant food adulteration exacerbate the problem, diminishing the availability and quality of safe and nutritious food.

Participants also pointed to population growth, poverty, and child-labour as factors that amplify the issue of undernourishment. These challenges create a cycle of deprivation that limits access to resources and opportunities for healthy living. Coupled with unhealthy lifestyles, poor hygiene, and the spread of misinformation on social media, these factors further aggravate the problem. Misleading dietary advice, often unverified, was identified as particularly harmful, leading to widespread confusion about nutrition.

Micronutrient deficiencies, unbalanced diets, and inadequate nutritional facilities were also highlighted as critical gaps. Communities lack access to fortified foods, safe milk, or reliable healthcare services, particularly in rural areas.

Participants emphasized the role of misinformation regarding vaccinations and dietary diversity, which hinders efforts to combat preventable illnesses and ensure balanced nutrition.

Overall, participants stressed the urgent need to address these systemic issues.

URGENT RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

To tackle malnutrition, participants proposed several solutions focused on youth leadership, multi-sectoral collaboration, and innovative strategies for long-term impact.

Educational Campaigns were central to the plan. Youth leaders should lead campaigns to educate communities about balanced diets and healthy food choices. Integrating nutrition into school curriculums would promote healthy habits from an early age. Social media and AI tools could help spread accurate information, especially in rural areas, where misinformation is common.

Youth Leadership was emphasized as crucial. Empowering young people to organize workshops and community activities would reach vulnerable populations, particularly mothers and children in rural areas. Collaboration with schools and local institutions could foster peer-to-peer advocacy and hands-on learning.

Government Interventions were considered essential. Regulating food prices would make nutritious food affordable for low-income families. Strengthening food safety regulations and implementing food fortification programs, such as adding nutrients to flour and salt, would help address nutrient deficiencies. Promoting sustainable agriculture and introducing population control measures were suggested to ensure long-term food security.

The Private Sector and NGOs were encouraged to play a significant role. The food industry should produce affordable, fortified products, while NGOs and international organizations could support food supplements and rural development initiatives.

Designing Food System Courses and familiarizing the public with the Food System Dashboard were also recommended. These tools would help educate people about food systems and track progress toward improving nutrition at local, national, and global levels.

In conclusion, collaborative efforts and long-term strategies are vital to ensure lasting solutions for malnutrition.

AREAS OF DIVERGENCE

Participants exhibited diverse perspectives on addressing malnutrition, reflecting varying priorities and strategies. Some advocated prioritizing urban areas for resource allocation due to population density, while others emphasized rural and underserved communities. Debates arose over focusing on immediate relief efforts like food distribution versus long-term solutions such as education and infrastructure development. Opinions also varied on implementation strategies, with some favouring strict government interventions and others championing grassroots campaigns. Discussions on nutrition education highlighted differences, with some preferring formal school curriculums and others supporting community workshops or peer-led initiatives. Similarly, while many supported food fortification to combat micronutrient deficiencies, others emphasized promoting natural, organic foods for sustainable health. Concerns about relying on digital platforms for education also emerged, citing issues like misinformation and limited rural access. Ethical debates arose around policies like a one-child strategy, underscoring the importance of culturally sensitive solutions. Participants also differed on the role of partnerships, with some prioritizing international collaborations and others focusing on local NGOs and community groups. These diverse perspectives emphasize the need for adaptable, region-specific approaches to combating malnutrition.

OVERALL SUMMARY

The workshop aimed to empower youth to address the critical issue of malnutrition in Pakistan, bringing together 34 participants aged 12 to 18 from diverse socio-economic, geographic, and educational backgrounds. This diversity fostered rich discussions on the country's nutrition challenges, including malnutrition, stunting, wasting, and obesity, which are widespread, especially in rural areas.

Participants were informed about Pakistan's alarming malnutrition statistics, with nearly 10 million children suffering from stunting, compounded by poverty affecting 39.2% of the population. They were encouraged to align their solutions with the global Nutrition for Growth (N4G) Summit to ensure both local and international impact.

Throughout the workshop, participants identified key barriers to addressing malnutrition, such as lack of awareness, economic constraints, food system inefficiencies, and misinformation, particularly on social media. Other challenges included child labour, population growth, and limited access to healthcare in rural areas.

In response, participants proposed actionable solutions focused on youth leadership and multi-sectoral collaboration, including:

- Educational Campaigns: Launch youth-led awareness campaigns on balanced diets and nutrition, integrate nutrition into school curriculums, and use social media and AI tools to counter misinformation.
- Youth Leadership: Empower youth to organize workshops and peer-led activities in rural and low-income areas, particularly targeting mothers and children.
- Government Interventions: Advocate for food price regulation, improved food safety, and food fortification programs. Promote sustainable agriculture and address population growth challenges.
- Private Sector & NGO Roles: Encourage the production of affordable fortified foods and support rural development, food supplements, and outreach programs.
- Healthcare & Nutrition Integration: Improve healthcare services, maternal nutrition programs, and introduce practical nutrition education in schools.
- Collaborative Long-Term Strategies: Foster public-private partnerships and mobilize youth leadership for sustainable, community-driven solutions.

Additionally, the designing and implementation of food system-related courses was proposed to educate individuals on food production, distribution, and nutrition, cultivating a skilled workforce capable of tackling malnutrition. Participants also suggested familiarizing the public with the Food System Dashboard, a tool that tracks food systems and can help governments monitor progress and address gaps in nutrition efforts.

The workshop concluded with strong enthusiasm and a commitment to create change, underscoring the importance of youth leadership in tackling malnutrition. By aligning local efforts with global initiatives like the N4G Summit, participants highlighted the importance of collaboration to ensure lasting, impactful solutions.

SECTION FOUR: PRINCIPLES OF ENGAGEMENT & METHOD

PRINCIPLES OF ENGAGEMENT

The workshop ensured equal participation by dividing participants into diverse groups that balanced age, gender, and socio-economic backgrounds. Younger participants were encouraged to take leadership roles within their groups, fostering shared responsibility. Interactive activities like “Networking Bingo” and group discussions provided a platform for everyone to engage. Smaller group settings allowed younger participants to express their ideas comfortably, ensuring that all voices were heard and valued. These measures promoted inclusivity and active participation, empowering all attendees to contribute meaningfully to the workshop.

METHOD AND SETTING

The workshop used interactive methods to engage participants. The venue was arranged in a U-shape for open communication, with round tables for group activities to encourage collaboration. Participants received colored pictures of children to spark discussion, and each group used charts and markers to highlight challenges and solutions. Creative tools like visual boards helped express ideas. The convenor also signed the children safeguarding statement, ensuring participant safety.

ADVICE FOR OTHER CONVENORS

Ensure participant diversity and use interactive activities like icebreakers and visual aids to engage youth. Form diverse groups, assign peer leaders, and simplify complex topics. Encourage brainstorming to identify challenges and solutions. Prepare facilitators thoroughly, briefing them on objectives and discussion guidance. Emphasize the importance of participants' roles in driving change to make them feel valued. Provide actionable takeaways, promote follow-up, ensure sufficient Q/A time

FEEDBACK FORM: ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The workshop was co-convened by the National Alliance for Safe Food, whose partnership was crucial to its success. We also acknowledge the invaluable contributions of the Punjab Food Authority and the DG of the Punjab Agri, Food, and Drug Regulatory Authority (PAFDA), whose expertise enhanced the workshop's impact. Additionally, our sincere gratitude goes to the participants and the institutions, both public and private, that referred their students, ensuring a diverse and engaged group.

RELEVANT LINKS

- **Media Coverage-1**
<https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/1266162-dialogue-held-on-nutrition-andfood-systems>
- **Media Coverage-2**
<https://e.thenews.com.pk/pindi/28-12-2024/page13>
- **Media Coverage-3**
<https://www.nation.com.pk/28-Dec-2024/dialogue-highlights-youth-s-role-inshaping-food-systems-nutrition>

ATTACHMENTS

- **Convenor- opening the workshop**
<https://nutritiondialogues.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/12/Children-Nutrition-Dialogue-Pakistan-Convenor-opening-remarks-scaled.jpg>
- **Group work-1**
<https://nutritiondialogues.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/12/Children-Nutrition-Dialogue-Pakistan-Children-Providing-Recommendations-scaled.jpg>
- **Group work-2**
<https://nutritiondialogues.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/12/Children-Nutrition-Dialogue-Pakistan-Children-Group-work-scaled.jpg>
- **Group work-3**
<https://nutritiondialogues.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/12/Children-Nutrition-Dialogue-Pakistan-Children-Providing-Recommendations-1-scaled.jpg>
- **Co-convenor**
<https://nutritiondialogues.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/12/Children-Nutrition-Dialogue-Pakistan-Facilitator-scaled.jpg>
- **Solutions-1**
<https://nutritiondialogues.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/12/Children-Nutrition-Dialogue-Pakistan-22-scaled.jpg>
- **Media Report**
<https://nutritiondialogues.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/12/Media-Report-Children-Workshop.pdf>