

OFFICIAL FEEDBACK FORM

DIALOGUE TITLE	Nutritional Dialogue Phase 2- Stakeholder dialogue-Rathnapura-Sri Lanka
DIALOGUE DATE	Wednesday, 13 May 2026 10:30 GMT +05:30
CONVENED BY	Lavanya Suriyakumar (National Campaign Manager), Johanne Rebeira (Campaign coordinator)
EVENT LANGUAGE	Tamil
HOST LOCATION	Ratnapura, Sri Lanka
GEOGRAPHIC SCOPE	Community level
AFFILIATIONS	World Vision Lanka
DIALOGUE EVENT PAGE	https://nutritiondialogues.org/dialogue/60272/



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	14
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PARTICIPATION BY AGE RANGE

0	0-11	0	12-18	3	19-29
9	30-49	2	50-74	0	75+

PARTICIPATION BY GENDER

12	Female	2	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)
2	Educators and Teachers	0	Faith Leaders/Faith Communities
0	Financial Institutions and Technical Partners	3	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)	4	Parents and Caregivers
0	Science and Academia	0	Small/Medium Enterprises
0	Sub-National/Local Government Officials and Representatives	0	United Nations
1	Women's Groups	1	Other (please state)

OTHER STAKEHOLDER GROUPS

NA

ADDITIONAL DETAIL ON PARTICIPANT DIVERSITY

All participants were from communities in the Ratnapura area and represented economically disadvantaged backgrounds. The group reflected a diverse mix of ethnic communities from different areas of the district, bringing a wide range of experiences and perspectives to the discussion.

SECTION TWO: FRAMING AND DISCUSSION

FRAMING

Ratnapura District, located in Sri Lanka's Sabaragamuwa Province, is well known for its gem industry and agricultural economy. A large proportion of the population depends on agriculture-related livelihoods, including tea, rubber, paddy cultivation, spices, and small-scale farming, while some families also engage in daily wage labor and gem-related activities. The district includes both rural and estate-sector communities, many of whom face economic vulnerabilities despite the area's rich natural resources.

DISCUSSION

The session commenced with a welcome address delivered by the World Vision Area Programme staff, followed by an introduction to the purpose and objectives of the discussion. Participants were also provided with a brief refresher on key nutrition concepts and an overview of the current nutritional situation in the area, supported by recent data and trends. Following the introductions, the discussion transitioned into an interactive and participatory session facilitated through open-ended questions. Participants actively shared their experiences, observations, and perspectives on the nutrition situation within their communities, highlighting key challenges and proposing practical solutions to improve nutrition outcomes. The conversation focused on several critical areas, including agricultural services, home gardening, school meal programmes, the quality and availability of foods sold through school canteens, and meal provision in preschools. Participants also reflected on the impact of the Ditwa cyclone, describing how it had disrupted livelihoods, food availability, and household food security, thereby increasing nutrition-related challenges for vulnerable families in the community.

SECTION THREE: DIALOGUE OUTCOMES

CHALLENGES

Low community awareness and knowledge of nutrition.
Nutritional disparities between urban and rural communities.
Increasing consumption of fast food and unhealthy dietary patterns.
Poverty leading to poor food choices and limited access to nutritious foods.
Preference for taste and affordability over nutritional value.
Meal-skipping practices due to daily work routines, particularly missing lunch.
Limited parental awareness of nutrition and healthy feeding practices.
Poor family food habits and dietary patterns.
Cultural beliefs and attitudes that negatively influence nutrition.
Inadequate management of children's meals within households.
Daily work pressures reducing the focus on preparing balanced meals.
Low household income and purchasing power.
Instability in tea plantation and agricultural incomes.
Increased food and fuel costs linked to broader economic pressures.
Drug and alcohol-related spending taking priority over household food needs.
Home gardening barriers and limited food production capacity.
Animal threats to cultivation, including damage caused by monkeys and peacocks.
Weather and climate-related impacts affecting food production.
Market access difficulties for local producers.
Natural disasters disrupting food security and food availability.
Pandemic-related impacts on livelihoods and nutrition.
Economic crises affecting household purchasing power.
Transportation and supply chain disruptions.
Global conflicts contributing to rising food and fuel prices.
Poor road access and transportation difficulties.
High transport costs affecting food accessibility.
Limitations in existing school meal programmes.
Inadequate infrastructure to support

URGENT ACTIONS

Conduct community-based nutrition awareness programmes.
Strengthen child-focused nutrition education.
Promote positive dietary behaviour change among families.
Improve school nutrition programmes and food quality.
Expand income-generation opportunities for households.
Promote self-employment initiatives.
Strengthen community resilience and livelihood development.
Support sustainable livelihood activities to improve household food security.
Promote and strengthen home gardening initiatives.
Support women's empowerment through food production and livelihood activities.
Improve local access to nutritious foods.
Address animal threats that affect household cultivation and food production.
Continue and strengthen school breakfast programmes.
Expand school meal support to higher grade levels.
Improve the quality and accessibility of nutritious foods in schools.
Strengthen government monitoring, review, and support mechanisms.
Improve disaster preparedness and response systems.
Provide infrastructure support to improve food access and service delivery.
Enhance road and transport facilities to improve market access and food distribution.
Strengthen community participation in nutrition-related initiatives.
Implement community awareness campaigns on nutrition and food security.
Encourage family-level and community-level actions to improve child nutrition.
Promote women's empowerment and community ownership of nutrition interventions.

AREAS OF DIVERGENCE

NA

OVERALL SUMMARY

The discussion highlighted that malnutrition and food insecurity in the community are driven by a combination of poverty, limited nutrition awareness, unhealthy dietary practices, and unstable livelihoods. Participants noted that many families struggle to access nutritious foods despite the availability of local resources, often due to low household incomes, poor food habits, and increasing reliance on inexpensive and less nutritious food options. Underweight children and pregnant mothers were identified as particularly vulnerable groups.

Participants also emphasized the impact of broader social, economic, and environmental factors on nutrition outcomes. Challenges such as low agricultural incomes, disasters, transportation barriers, rising food prices, limited market access, and damage to home gardens from animals were reported as significant obstacles to maintaining household food security. In addition, issues such as alcohol and drug-related spending, inadequate parental awareness, and limitations in school meal programmes further contribute to poor nutrition outcomes.

To address these challenges, participants recommended strengthening nutrition awareness, promoting positive dietary behaviour change, and expanding income-generating opportunities for families. They also highlighted the importance of home gardening, women's empowerment, improved school nutrition programmes, better government support and monitoring, disaster preparedness, and stronger community participation. Overall, participants emphasized that sustainable improvements in nutrition require integrated efforts that combine livelihood development, food security, education, and community engagement.

SECTION FOUR: PRINCIPLES OF ENGAGEMENT & METHOD

PRINCIPLES OF ENGAGEMENT

All participants were provided with an opportunity to share their perspectives on challenges, issues, and potential solutions within an open and inclusive discussion.

METHOD AND SETTING

Seating was arranged in an indoor room to encourage interaction, and the National Campaign Coordinator facilitated the discussion by guiding participants through questions on challenges, issues, and suggested solutions. The session was conducted in a semi-informal manner, with participation from individuals representing diverse ethnic backgrounds.

ADVICE FOR OTHER CONVENORS

NA

FEEDBACK FORM: ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We would like to express our sincere gratitude to the World Vision Lanka Area Development Programme, its staff members, and community volunteers for successfully organizing this workshop. We also extend our appreciation to Technical Advisor – Integrated Nutritio and Technical Specialist – Disaster Risk Reduction for their valuable support and guidance.