

OFFICIAL FEEDBACK FORM

WORKSHOP TITLE	Nutritional Dialogue Phase 2- Children's workshop-Ganga Ihala Korale-Sri Lanka
WORKSHOP DATE	Friday, 15 May 2026 15:00 GMT +05:30
CONVENED BY	Johanne Rebeira (Campaign coordinator),Dinushi Tennekoon (MEAL coordinator)
EVENT LANGUAGE	Sinhala
GEOGRAPHIC SCOPE	Community level - Ganga Ihala Korela
AFFILIATIONS	World Vision Lanka-Ganga Ihala Korela Area Development Programme
WORKSHOP EVENT PAGE	https://nutritiondialogues.org/dialogue/60282/



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	17
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PARTICIPATION BY AGE RANGE

9	12-15	8	16-18
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PARTICIPATION BY GENDER

10	Female	7	Male	0	Other/Prefer not to say
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ADDITIONAL DETAIL ON PARTICIPATION DIVERSITY

Representatives from children's societies and Impact Plus clubs participated in the discussion, while the Ganga Ihala Korahaya community is predominantly Sinhala and rural community. These children were the representative from the area where have been actively engaged in the children society activities as well.

SECTION TWO: FRAMING

The participants mainly consisted of school-aged children from farming and low-income households, reflecting the local socio-economic conditions, cultural practices, and food habits of the area. Moreover, both Sinhala and Tamil children participated, representing rural and tea plantation/estate communities. The session began with an icebreaker activity to build rapport with the children, followed by asking them to define nutrition in order to assess their existing knowledge. Most of the children were able to explain the idea of what nutrition is and why it is important to consume nutritious foods. The discussion then explored the current nutritional situation in their community, considering local dietary practices, food availability, and socio-cultural influences. Particular attention was given to how the 'Ditwa' cyclone (disaster) affected nutrition and food security, including disruptions to household food access and livelihoods. The conversation also covered the availability of nutritious food in safety centers during emergencies, the quality of school meals, and the availability and standards of food provided by school canteens. The session concluded with children sharing their suggestions and their vision for improving the future nutritional situation in their community. To ensure engagement and meaningful participation, child-friendly tools such as story-based photographs and poster-making activities were used throughout the session.

SECTION THREE: CHILDREN'S WORKSHOP OUTCOMES

CHALLENGES

Following challenges have shared by the children on their experience and perspectives.

1. Most parents focus only on satisfying hunger and do not provide nutritious food.
2. Due to a lack of money, families are unable to provide nutritious food for their households.
3. There is a lack of awareness about nutritious foods that are locally available.
4. Many people believe that meat, eggs, and fish are the only nutritious foods, but they are not aware that green leaves and vegetables grown in their home gardens are also nutritious.
5. Only primary school children receive school meals and the other older children do not.
6. Some schools have canteens, but most of them sell fast foods such as rolls, buns, and other junk foods.
7. Most children prefer to eat junk food.
8. Food prepared in school canteens is often not made safely and lacks proper cleanliness.
9. Many people stayed in safety camps for about a month, while others stayed with their relatives for the same period, and they faced food shortages.
10. Children love to have sugary drinks
11. Mothers are primarily responsible for providing nutritious food, as they have a better understanding of their family's needs. But fathers were not included in the family nutrition most of the times.

URGENT RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

1. Awareness sessions are needed to promote positive changes in attitudes and behaviors related to nutrition and health.
2. The system should be strengthened through collaboration between the community and the government to solve and address these problems.
3. There is a need to regulate the consumption of junk food and sugary drinks in school canteens.
4. Nutritious foods can be provided through home gardening.
5. Physical exercise and activities should be promoted.
6. Home gardening should be encouraged in both communities and schools.

AREAS OF DIVERGENCE

NA

OVERALL SUMMARY

The discussion highlighted several challenges related to nutrition and health within communities and schools. Many parents tend to focus on fulfilling hunger rather than providing balanced and nutritious meals, often due to financial limitations and lack of awareness about locally available nutritious foods. There is also a common misconception that only foods such as meat, eggs, and fish are nutritious, while the value of green leafy vegetables and home-grown produce is often overlooked.

School-related issues were also identified, including limited access to school meals (mainly for primary students), and the widespread availability of unhealthy foods in school canteens. These canteens often sell junk food and sugary items, sometimes under poor hygiene conditions, which further encourages unhealthy eating habits among children.

Additionally, external factors such as displacement during disasters (e.g., staying in safety camps or with relatives) have contributed to food insecurity for some families. Mothers were recognized as playing a key role in ensuring proper nutrition within households, as they are often responsible for food preparation and family health.

To address these issues, several recommendations were proposed. These include conducting awareness programs to improve knowledge and attitudes about nutrition, strengthening collaboration between communities and government, regulating unhealthy food options in school canteens, and promoting home gardening to improve access to nutritious foods. Encouraging physical activity and integrating nutrition-focused initiatives in schools and communities were also emphasized as important steps toward improving overall health outcomes.

SECTION FOUR: PRINCIPLES OF ENGAGEMENT & METHOD

PRINCIPLES OF ENGAGEMENT

All children actively participated in the discussion and enjoyed the activities they were engaged in, while openly sharing their honest experiences and ideas. Since the session was very interactive the children were encouraged to share their views and ideas effectively.

METHOD AND SETTING

All children were sitting on half circle and they have actively engaged with activities and prepared posters with their expressions and ideas. Session was conducted for around two hours

ADVICE FOR OTHER CONVENORS

An enabling, child-friendly environment was created where children felt safe to share their ideas and express themselves at their own level

FEEDBACK FORM: ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We would like to express our sincere gratitude to the World Vision Lanka Ganga Ihala Korelaya Area Programme, its staff members, and community volunteers for successfully organizing this workshop. We also extend our appreciation to Dinuka Bandara (Technical Advisor - Integrated Nutrition) and Chandrika Kularathna (Technical Specialist - Disaster Risk Reduction) for their valuable support and guidance in designing the guiding questions used to facilitate the dialogue.

ATTACHMENTS

- Slide deck