

OFFICIAL FEEDBACK FORM

WORKSHOP TITLE	Nutritional Dialogue Phase 2- Children's workshop-Rathnapura-Sri Lanka
WORKSHOP DATE	Wednesday, 13 May 2026 15:00 GMT +05:30
CONVENED BY	Lavanya Suriyakumar (National Campaign Manager), Johanne Rebeira (Campaign coordinator)
EVENT LANGUAGE	Tamil
HOST CITY	Ratnapura, Sri Lanka
GEOGRAPHIC SCOPE	Community level
AFFILIATIONS	Rathnapura Area Programme- World Vision Lanka
WORKSHOP EVENT PAGE	https://nutritiondialogues.org/dialogue/60295/

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	9
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PARTICIPATION BY AGE RANGE

2	12-15	7	16-18
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PARTICIPATION BY GENDER

7	Female	2	Male	0	Other/Prefer not to say
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ADDITIONAL DETAIL ON PARTICIPATION DIVERSITY

All the children were from the Ratnapura area and came from low-income families that primarily depend on daily wage labor for their livelihoods. Most of them were from economically disadvantaged backgrounds. This is their first time nutritional dialogue. Both Sinhala and Tamil speaking children participated.

SECTION TWO: FRAMING

The session commenced with an icebreaker activity to build rapport and create a comfortable environment for the children. To assess their existing knowledge, the children were invited to share their understanding of nutrition. Most participants were able to explain what nutrition means and highlighted the importance of consuming nutritious foods for healthy growth and well-being. The discussion then focused on the nutritional situation within their communities, exploring dietary habits, food availability, and socio-cultural factors that influence food choices. Children shared their experiences regarding access to nutritious foods and the challenges faced by families from economically vulnerable backgrounds.

SECTION THREE: CHILDREN'S WORKSHOP OUTCOMES

CHALLENGES

Food Safety and Quality Challenges

Excessive use of chemicals and fertilizers in vegetable cultivation.

Presence of artificial ingredients and flavor enhancers in food products.

Concerns about the quality and safety of foods available in local markets.

Limited access to nutritious foods despite their availability.

Economic Challenges

Low and unstable household incomes affecting food purchasing power.

Parents often prioritize affordable foods over nutritious options.

Economic hardship limits access to quality and diverse foods.

Family and Caregiving Challenges

Estate sector mothers face labor demands and migration-related challenges, affecting childcare and food preparation.

Limited nutrition awareness among some parents and caregivers.

School Food Environment Challenges

High oil content in foods sold at school canteens.

Poor nutritional quality of school meals and canteen foods.

Easy access to sugary and glucose-based foods.

Children are attracted to unhealthy foods due to their taste, color, and appearance.

Preference for fast foods over healthier alternatives.

Nutrition and Health Challenges

Poor dietary habits contributing to malnutrition.

Risk of poor physical growth and development.

Reduced learning ability and concentration.

Increased susceptibility to illness and long-term health problems.

URGENT RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

Improve the nutritional quality of foods sold in school canteens.

Reduce the use of oil, sugar, and processed ingredients in school foods.

Promote healthier meal and snack options within schools.

Strengthen standards and monitoring of school food environments.

Increase awareness among parents on balanced and nutritious diets.

Encourage home gardening and household food production.

Prioritize nutritious meals over foods chosen solely for taste or appearance.

Promote shared responsibility of both parents for child nutrition.

Strengthen nutrition education and awareness programmes.

Promote the use of locally available nutritious foods.

Encourage discussions on nutrition between parents and children.

Support family-level food security and self-reliance initiatives.

Promote tailoring and other small income-generating opportunities.

Encourage household food production to improve food security.

Strengthen economic resilience of families through livelihood support.

Increase self-reliance to improve access to nutritious foods.

AREAS OF DIVERGENCE

NA

OVERALL SUMMARY

The discussion highlighted that children's nutrition is influenced by a combination of food availability, household economic conditions, family practices, and the school food environment. While most children demonstrated a good understanding of nutrition and its importance, they identified several factors that limit access to healthy and nutritious foods within their communities.

Children expressed concerns about food safety and quality, particularly the excessive use of chemicals in agriculture, artificial additives in foods, and the poor nutritional quality of foods available in school canteens. They also noted that economic hardships and unstable family incomes often affect food choices, leading families to prioritize affordability over nutritional value.

The children emphasized the need for a collective effort from families, schools, and communities to improve nutrition outcomes. Key recommendations included promoting healthier food options in schools, strengthening nutrition awareness among parents and children, encouraging home food production, and supporting family livelihoods. They highlighted that sustainable improvements in child nutrition require greater awareness, healthier food systems, and shared responsibility among all stakeholders.

SECTION FOUR: PRINCIPLES OF ENGAGEMENT & METHOD

PRINCIPLES OF ENGAGEMENT

Children were encouraged to communicate in their local language to ensure they could express their thoughts comfortably and confidently, with translations provided where necessary to support understanding. All participants were given equal opportunities to share their views, experiences, and recommendations, fostering an inclusive and participatory discussion.

METHOD AND SETTING

The consultation was held in a familiar and child-friendly setting, which helped create a comfortable and safe environment for engagement. As a result, the children actively participated in the activities and openly shared their perspectives throughout the session.

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 Nutrition and Technical Specialist - Disaster Risk Reduction for their valuable support and guidance.

ATTACHMENTS

- Group photo
- Group work
- Children doing the collage
- Collage image