

OFFICIAL FEEDBACK FORM

WORKSHOP TITLE	Nutrition Dialogue Phase II: Amplifying Children's Voices for Better Nutrition Outcomes in East Gonja
WORKSHOP DATE	Wednesday, 1 July 2026 09:43 GMT +00:00
CONVENED BY	Nkikia Williams Event announced on behalf of the Convenor by: Joshua Okomongye. Local Level Advocacy and Acting Campaigns coordinator Feedback published on behalf of Convenor by: Joshua Okomongye. Local Level advocacy Coordinator
EVENT LANGUAGE	Gonja, Hausa, Twi and English
HOST CITY	Salaga, Ghana
GEOGRAPHIC SCOPE	This Nutrition Dialogue was conducted at the community level in Kpembe, within the East Gonja Area Program of the Savannah Region of Ghana. Predominantly Gonja and Housa
AFFILIATIONS	The event was part of the Phase II nutrition dialogue activities of World Vision Ghana
WORKSHOP EVENT PAGE	https://nutritiondialogues.org/dialogue/60799/



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	20
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PARTICIPATION BY AGE RANGE

20	12-15	0	16-18
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PARTICIPATION BY GENDER

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

The workshop was conducted in Kpembe, a rural community in the East Gonja Area Program, and brought together 20 children (10 girls and 10 boys) aged 12-17 years from diverse socio-economic backgrounds. Participants included children from households facing economic challenges, food insecurity, and limited access to nutritious foods. The dialogue was inclusive of children from different ethnic and religious backgrounds within the community. Discussions were held in both Twi and English.

SECTION TWO: FRAMING

The workshop was introduced as part of World Vision Ghana's Nutrition Dialogue Phase II, a child-centred initiative aimed at understanding children's experiences with nutrition, hunger, and food security and ensuring that their voices contribute to nutrition policies and investments. Facilitators explained the importance of good nutrition for children's growth, learning, health, and overall well-being. The discussion was framed within the local context of poverty, rising food prices, and limited access to diverse and nutritious foods, which many families in Kpembe and surrounding communities experience. Participants highlighted that despite the availability of some food crops, many households struggle to afford a balanced diet due to financial constraints and the high cost of food items. The dialogue also recognized that inadequate knowledge about nutrition among some parents and caregivers can affect household food choices and children's dietary practices. Children shared concerns about the lack of food variety, economic hardship, and challenges faced by farming households in producing enough food and generating income. These factors were identified as key contributors to poor nutrition and food insecurity within the community. Participants also noted that limited resources can affect schools' ability to provide adequate meals for learners. The workshop emphasized that children are not only beneficiaries of nutrition programmes but also important stakeholders with valuable insights and solutions. Through interactive discussions, participants explored practical actions to improve nutrition, including eating fruits and vegetables, consuming balanced diets, and practicing proper hygiene such as handwashing before meals and after using the toilet. The dialogue provided a safe and inclusive environment for children to discuss local nutrition challenges, share personal experiences, and develop recommendations for government and other stakeholders.

SECTION THREE: CHILDREN'S WORKSHOP OUTCOMES

CHALLENGES

Participants identified several nutrition-related challenges that affect their ability to access and consume healthy and balanced diets. The most commonly mentioned challenge was poverty and lack of money, which limits the ability of many households to purchase nutritious foods. Children explained that even when they understand the importance of healthy eating, their families often cannot afford the variety of foods needed for a balanced diet.

Another major challenge highlighted was the high cost of food items. Participants noted that rising food prices make it difficult for families to regularly access nutritious foods such as fruits, vegetables, and protein-rich foods. As a result, some households are forced to rely on less diverse diets that may not provide the nutrients needed for healthy growth and development. The children also identified limited knowledge and awareness about nutrition among some parents, caregivers, and community members as a challenge. They indicated that inadequate understanding of healthy eating practices can influence food choices and reduce the quality of meals prepared at home. Participants emphasized the need for increased nutrition education within communities to help families make informed decisions about food and child nutrition. In addition, participants reported inadequate variety of food available within households. While some food may be available, it is often not sufficient in diversity to ensure balanced nutrition. Limited access to different food groups can contribute to poor dietary quality and increase the risk of malnutrition among children. The discussion further revealed concerns about the challenges faced by farming households, including limited financial resources to support agricultural production. Children felt that when farming activities are constrained, food availability and household income are negatively affected, which in turn impacts nutrition and food security.

URGENT RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

Participants identified several actions that they considered urgently necessary to improve nutrition and reduce hunger and malnutrition in their community. A key recommendation was for the government to take measures to reduce the prices of food items, as the high cost of food was identified as a major barrier to accessing nutritious and balanced meals. Children explained that many households struggle to afford essential foods, making it difficult to maintain healthy diets.

Participants also emphasized the need for increased nutrition education and awareness creation for parents, caregivers, and community members. They recommended that government agencies, schools, health workers, and development partners support community-based education programmes to improve knowledge of healthy eating practices, balanced diets, and child nutrition.

Another urgent recommendation was for the government to provide schools with adequate funding to purchase foodstuffs and support school feeding activities. Participants believed that access to nutritious meals in schools would contribute to improved health, learning, and overall well-being among children.

The children further recommended that financial and technical support be provided to farming households and communities to strengthen agricultural production. They suggested that investments in farming activities, including access to resources and support services, would improve food availability, increase household incomes, and contribute to better nutrition outcomes.

In addition to these recommendations, participants recognized the importance of individual responsibility in promoting good nutrition. They proposed continuing to practice healthy behaviours such as eating fruits and vegetables, consuming balanced diets, and maintaining good hygiene through regular handwashing before meals and after using the toilet.

AREAS OF DIVERGENCE

There was a high level of agreement among participants regarding the main nutrition challenges affecting children and their families in the community. Most participants identified poverty, lack of money, high food prices, inadequate food variety, and limited nutrition knowledge as the key factors contributing to poor nutrition and food insecurity. There was also broad consensus on the need for government support, nutrition education, improved school feeding, and assistance for farming activities.

While opinions generally aligned, some differences emerged in terms of the emphasis placed on specific challenges and solutions. For example, some participants viewed the high cost of food as the most significant barrier to good nutrition, while others focused more on the lack of nutrition knowledge among parents and caregivers. A few participants stressed the importance of strengthening household farming and food production, whereas others highlighted the need for direct financial support and increased resources for schools.

Participants also differed slightly in their views on the actions that individuals could take to improve nutrition. Some emphasized healthy eating practices such as consuming fruits, vegetables, and balanced diets, while others focused more on hygiene practices, including handwashing before eating and after using the toilet, as important contributors to better health and nutrition.

Despite these minor differences in priority and emphasis, there were no major disagreements or conflicting positions among the children. The discussion remained constructive and respectful, with participants building on one another's contributions and collectively identifying practical solutions. Overall, there was strong consensus that improving affordability of food, increasing nutrition education, supporting schools, and strengthening community livelihoods are essential steps towards reducing hunger and malnutrition and improving the nutritional well-being of children.

OVERALL SUMMARY

The East Gonja Area Program Nutrition Dialogue, held on 2nd July 2026 in Kpembe, brought together 20 children (10 girls, 10 boys) aged 12 to 17, as part of Phase 2 of World Vision Ghana's Nutrition Dialogue initiative. This session builds on the foundational work of Phase 1, continuing our commitment to placing children's own voices, experiences, and recommendations at the centre of nutrition policy and programming discussions ahead of the Nutrition for Growth (N4G) Summit in March 2025.

Conducted in a mix of Twi and English to ensure full comprehension and comfort for all participants, the dialogue explored children's understanding of nutrition, the barriers they face, their recommendations to government, and the practical steps they are already taking in their own lives to eat and live more healthily.

Key Messages

Children demonstrated a clear and practical grasp of nutrition, describing it simply and accurately as eating a healthy, balanced diet to support the body's growth. This foundational understanding is encouraging and suggests that basic nutrition messaging is reaching children at the community level, even where broader systemic barriers persist.

When asked about the challenges they face, participants were candid and consistent: poverty, the high cost of food, and a lack of variety in available food emerged as the dominant themes. Several children explicitly linked their nutrition challenges to family income and the affordability of food, underscoring that for this age group, nutrition is inseparable from household economic security. A number of children also identified a gap in nutrition knowledge among their families and communities, suggesting that awareness alone will not resolve the problem without addressing affordability and access simultaneously.

On recommendations to government, the children's responses were remarkably targeted and practical for their age group. They called for government action to reduce food prices, to fund community education on nutrition for parents, to provide adequate financial support to schools for food provisions, and to invest in community farming activities. These recommendations reflect a sophisticated understanding that nutrition outcomes are shaped by a combination of affordability, education, institutional support, and local food production, rather than any single intervention.

Importantly, the children did not position themselves purely as recipients of support. When asked what they were doing on their own to improve their nutrition, participants spoke about eating fruits and vegetables regularly, maintaining a balanced diet, and practising good hygiene, such as handwashing before eating and after using the toilet. This reflects a genuine sense of agency and personal responsibility, even amid the structural constraints they described.

Reflections on the Experience

Beyond the content shared, the dialogue itself felt like a meaningful and affirming space for the children involved. There was a noticeable openness in how participants engaged, particularly given the balanced gender representation, which allowed both girls and boys to speak candidly about issues that affect their households and daily lives. The children did not simply recite challenges; they offered solutions with a level of specificity, around school feeding budgets, farming support, and price control, that reflected real lived experience rather than rehearsed answers.

There was also a quiet dignity in how the children discussed their own contributions to their health. Rather than presenting themselves solely through the lens of hardship, they were proud to describe the small, consistent actions they take each day, a reminder that children are not passive subjects of nutrition interventions but active participants capable of shaping their own wellbeing when given the right support.

Overall, the Kpembe dialogue reaffirmed the core premise of the Nutrition Dialogue initiative: that children, when given a genuine platform, articulate the realities of hunger and malnutrition with clarity, and offer recommendations that are both grounded and actionable. Their voices, poverty as the root challenge, food affordability as the practical barrier, and community-level investment as the solution, deserve to be carried forward prominently into the N4G synthesis report as a direct reflection of what those most affected by malnutrition believe must change.

SECTION FOUR: PRINCIPLES OF ENGAGEMENT & METHOD

PRINCIPLES OF ENGAGEMENT

The Kpembe dialogue was designed around several core Principles of Engagement. Inclusivity was reflected in the deliberate balance of 10 girls and 10 boys, ensuring both genders had equal voice on issues affecting them. Safe and enabling environment was prioritised by conducting the session in Twi and English, allowing children to express themselves in their most comfortable language, free from pressure to conform to adult-led narratives. Meaningful participation was evident in the open-ended nature of the questions, which invited children to share genuine understanding, challenges, and solutions rather than prompting predetermined answers. Respect for children's agency was reflected in the final question, which recognised children not only as reporters of problems but as active contributors already taking steps to improve their own nutrition. Finally, accountability was built into the process itself: by systematically capturing children's recommendations to government.

METHOD AND SETTING

The workshop was convened using a participatory child-centred dialogue methodology, where children were encouraged to share their understanding of nutrition, discuss challenges, identify solutions, and make recommendations. Interactive group discussions and guided questions were used to ensure active participation and meaningful engagement. The dialogue provided equal opportunities for both girls and boys to contribute, with discussions conducted in Twi and English to promote inclusivity.

ADVICE FOR OTHER CONVENORS

Keep group sizes small and balanced by gender, as this encourages candid participation from both boys and girls. Conduct sessions in local languages to ensure children fully understand questions and can express nuanced answers rather than simplified responses. Use simple, open-ended questions structured around understanding, challenges, recommendations, and personal action, this sequence naturally builds from knowledge to agency. Allow enough time for children to reflect before answering.

FEEDBACK FORM: ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We extend our sincere gratitude to the children of Kpembe who participated with openness and thoughtfulness, sharing their experiences and recommendations with clarity and confidence. We thank the East Gonja Area Program team for their facilitation and logistical support in organising the dialogue. Appreciation also goes to the community leaders and parents who supported children's participation, and to World Vision Ghana for its continued leadership.

ATTACHMENTS

- <https://nutritiondialogues.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/07/NUTRITION-DIALOGUE-WITH-CHILDREN-EAST-GONJA.docx>