

The Nutrition Dialogue held in Nyagatare District in June 2025 was an inspiring and highly engaging event. It successfully united a wide range of stakeholders, including parents, community health workers, local leaders, and volunteers, all committed to tackling child malnutrition through community-driven approaches. The event focused on sharing experiences and best practices of the Positive Deviance/Hearth (PD/Hearth) model, which empowers families to learn from positive behaviors already present within their own communities.

Throughout the dialogue, participants actively exchanged ideas on how nutrition education, growth monitoring, and practical cooking demonstrations using local foods can be scaled up to support children's health. Many mothers shared personal testimonies about the positive changes they have observed in their families after applying knowledge gained through PD/Hearth sessions.

The atmosphere was hopeful and collaborative. Participants expressed strong enthusiasm and motivation to continue championing child nutrition in their homes and neighborhoods. The event underscored the importance of local ownership and sustainability in nutrition interventions, emphasizing that solutions need not come from outside but can be found within communities themselves.

Overall, the dialogue felt inclusive, respectful, and solution-oriented. It highlighted both progress made and the ongoing challenges, particularly around maintaining behavior change and ensuring access to diverse, nutritious foods year-round. The supportive environment encouraged open communication, which helped build trust among stakeholders.

From my perspective, the event was a powerful reminder that nutrition improvement is not only a technical issue but deeply connected to community empowerment, education, and practical action. It reinforced the value of participatory approaches and showed how shared knowledge and mutual support can lead to sustainable impact.

The dialogue also strengthened partnerships between Caritas Byumba, World Vision Rwanda, and local actors, creating momentum for future collaborative efforts to end malnutrition. It left me with a deep sense of optimism that, with continued commitment and community engagement, significant strides can be made toward healthier futures for Rwanda's children.

In summary, this Nutrition Dialogue was more than a meeting; it was a vibrant platform for learning, inspiration, and collective commitment to ending child malnutrition through locally-driven, practical solutions.