

# OFFICIAL FEEDBACK FORM

DIALOGUE TITLE	Perspectives of the Panamanian Indigenous Woman - Ngäbe-Buglé
DIALOGUE DATE	Tuesday, 29 October 2024 16:00 GMT -05:00
CONVENED BY	Lina Lay Mendivil Event announced on behalf of the Convenor by: Nicanor Montero / Vielka Méndez. Professional capacity, technical support and translation
EVENT LANGUAGE	Ngäbe-Bugle
HOST LOCATION	Soloy, Panama
GEOGRAPHIC SCOPE	Besiko District - Ngäbe-Buglé Region
AFFILIATIONS	Soloy Health Center - Ministry of Health
DIALOGUE EVENT PAGE	<a href="https://nutritiondialogues.org/dialogue/55150/">https://nutritiondialogues.org/dialogue/55150/</a>



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

25

## PARTICIPATION BY AGE RANGE

0 0-11

0 12-18

0 19-29

1 30-49

0 50-74

0 75+

## PARTICIPATION BY GENDER

15 Female

10 Male

0 Other/Prefer not to say

## NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS FROM EACH STAKEHOLDER GROUP

0 Children, Youth Groups and Students

0 Educators and Teachers

0 Financial Institutions and Technical Partners

0 Healthcare Professionals

0 Information and Technology Providers

0 Marketing and Advertising Experts

0 News and Media (e.g. Journalists)

0 Science and Academia

0 Sub-National/Local Government Officials and Representatives

0 Women's Groups

0 Civil Society Organisations (including consumer groups and environmental organisations)

0 Faith Leaders/Faith Communities

0 Food Producers (including farmers)

25 Indigenous Peoples

0 Large Business and Food Retailers

0 National/Federal Government Officials and Representatives

0 Parents and Caregivers

0 Small/Medium Enterprises

0 United Nations

1 Other (please state)

## OTHER STAKEHOLDER GROUPS

Not applicable

## ADDITIONAL DETAIL ON PARTICIPANT DIVERSITY

The Dialogue event took place in the Ngäbe-Buglé region, involving 25 participants from different profiles: 15 women, including pregnant women, and 10 male producers. This group represented a diversity of both genders, gender and community roles, addressing factors of ethnicity and rural context. The composition of the group allowed integrate different perspectives on the problems and solutions related to food and nutrition in the region, enriching

## SECTION TWO: FRAMING AND DISCUSSION

### FRAMING

The event began with an introduction that contextualized the local situation in the Ngäbe-Buglé region, addressing topics such as acute and chronic malnutrition rates, changes in dietary patterns, and nutritional deficiencies, especially among older adults. A workshop on dietary diversity was held where participants reflected on what they used to consume during their childhood and what they currently consume. In addition, a comparative calculation exercise was carried out on the costs of traditional foods versus current ones, which allowed the identification of economic and cultural barriers in the transition towards healthier diets.

### DISCUSSION

The dialogue focused on three key questions: What are the main concerns, challenges and problems regarding nutrition and food faced by the community? What urgent actions or solutions could be implemented to address these problems? What key actors would be needed to implement these solutions? These questions allowed participants to identify the main challenges, propose viable solutions and define the alliances needed to promote significant change in the community.

# SECTION THREE: DIALOGUE OUTCOMES

## CHALLENGES

Participants identified various nutritional challenges affecting communities, especially women and children. One of the most prominent problems is the high percentage of single mothers, which limits the economic access of families and creates difficulties in providing adequate food, increasing the rates of acute and chronic malnutrition. In addition, they pointed out the lack of technical advice on food production and the absence of soil studies, which limits agricultural productivity. Another important challenge is the poor management of pests in indigenous communities, which affects the quality and quantity of crops. The scarcity of organic foods and the increased use of pesticides and pesticides, which damage both soil and food, affecting people's health, were also mentioned. Climate change is another factor that complicates food production, as it alters crop patterns. Added to this is the lack of interest and initiative in agricultural production by the population, especially women and young people, who also face difficulties in accessing suitable land for production. Finally, the limited food diversity and nutritional deficiencies in the population, particularly among older adults, as well as the high cost of food were highlighted.

## URGENT ACTIONS

The organization of producers, families and communities, manage seeds for small producers and encourage the creation of family gardens as a form of food self-sufficiency. In addition, greater investment for agricultural production in indigenous areas. Likewise, they suggested creating sustainability policies that address the areas of health, tourism, the environment and production. Regarding capacity building, in different areas and the creation of local producer councils, with their respective sales stands and monthly fairs to promote local production. The importance of guaranteeing access to water sources for consumption and production, providing greater technical institutional support and sharing native seeds among producers who do not have access to them was also mentioned. In addition, the need to formalize agricultural production, carry out soil studies and train the community in the identification of native seeds from the indigenous region was highlighted. Finally, a wide range of key actors were identified as essential to finding effective solutions. The family, the fundamental nucleus, was highlighted as the main driver of change. Individuals, as role models, play a crucial role in social and family transformation. Government institutions, such as ANATI (National Land Administration Authority), MIDES (Ministry of Social Development), AMPYMEs (Small and Medium Enterprises Authority) and representatives of districts, provide technical knowledge and resources to promote development. Traditional authorities, such as local, regional and general chiefs, play a conciliatory role and promote cultural development. Also, the Agricultural Development Bank, IDIAP (Agricultural Development Institute) and INADEH (National Institute for Professional Training and Capacity Building for Human Development) offer credits and training.

## AREAS OF DIVERGENCE

During the dialogue, there were no differences of opinion and position among the participants regarding the description of the problem, the implementation of solutions and the role of the actors.

## OVERALL SUMMARY

The dialogue highlighted a number of challenges that hinder food and nutritional security in indigenous communities in the Ngäbe Buglé region. Among the main problems identified is food insecurity, characterized by high rates of malnutrition, especially among children, due to limited availability and access to nutritious foods. Agricultural production is limited by a lack of technical knowledge, access to fertile land and financial resources, which hinders the development of sustainable agricultural production.

Changing dietary habits, with a greater preference for processed and less healthy foods, have contributed to malnutrition. In addition, the impact of climate change, with extreme weather events such as droughts and floods, affects agricultural production and food availability. Inequality in access to resources, basic services and opportunities perpetuates gaps between different population groups.

Participants proposed a series of concrete actions to address these challenges. Among the most notable proposals are strengthening local production, promoting family farming, the production of healthy foods and the creation of local markets to ensure access to fresh and nutritious food.

The importance of training and technical assistance was also emphasized, implementing training programs in good agricultural practices, pest management and nutrition to improve the capacities of producers. Investment in infrastructure, such as improving access to drinking water, building roads and implementing irrigation systems, is crucial to facilitate agricultural production.

The development of public policies that promote food security, sustainable agriculture and gender equality was also considered essential. Finally, the importance of community organization was highlighted, promoting community participation and the creation of producer networks to strengthen the communities' capacity for action and negotiation.

Despite the consensus on the need to address nutritional challenges, some divergences emerged regarding the implementation of solutions. Among the main challenges were difficulties in coordinating actions between the different actors involved, resistance to change and lack of participation in community initiatives by some groups, and different opinions on the most urgent actions to be implemented.

In addition, discussions were observed on the role of local and government authorities in implementing the solutions. The dialogue on nutrition in the Ngäbe Buglé region has highlighted the urgency of addressing the nutritional challenges affecting indigenous communities. The implementation of the proposed actions will require a long-term commitment and the active participation of all actors involved.

It is recommended to strengthen inter-institutional coordination and facilitate collaboration between different government institutions and civil society organizations. It is crucial to incorporate the gender perspective, ensuring that women actively participate in decision-making and the design of interventions.

Promoting research, conducting studies to generate scientific evidence to design more effective interventions, is essential. Likewise, establishing monitoring and evaluation systems to measure progress and adjust strategies as necessary is essential. In summary, dialogue has been an important first step in identifying challenges and opportunities to improve food and nutritional security in the Ngäbe Buglé Region. Implementation of the proposed actions will require a joint and sustained effort by all stakeholders. all the actors involved.

# SECTION FOUR: PRINCIPLES OF ENGAGEMENT & METHOD

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## PRINCIPLES OF ENGAGEMENT

Priority was given to the inclusion of diverse actors, including representatives of indigenous communities, local authorities, civil society organisations, government institutions and nutrition experts. A safe and respectful space was guaranteed for the expression of opinions and active listening. Measures were taken to manage potential conflicts of interest. Prior to the event, an analysis of participants was conducted and potential areas of conflict were identified. This information was shared with the facilitators so that they could anticipate and address potential tensions during the dialogue.

## METHOD AND SETTING

The methodology used combined elements of participatory workshops and brainstorming. Tools such as simulation and prioritization exercises were used to facilitate discussion and the identification of solutions. The dialogue took place in a participatory environment, in a health center in the Ngäbe Buglé region, using the local language, which allowed participants to feel comfortable and express their opinions freely.

## ADVICE FOR OTHER CONVENORS

**Effective communication:** Maintain constant and transparent communication with all participants, informing them of the dialogue's objectives, agenda, and expectations. **Skilled facilitation:** Enlist trained facilitators who can effectively guide the dialogue, encourage participation from all, and manage potential conflicts. **Adaptation to context:** Adapt the methodology and discussion topics to the specific context of the community.

# FEEDBACK FORM: ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Huge thanks to Nicanor Montero and Vielka Mendez for organizing and coordinating this dialogue. Also, to the Soloy Health Center of the Ministry of Health for the physical space. Lastly, to the DEPAS Research Groups of the Faculty of Agricultural Sciences of the University of Panama and the INSAS Research Group of the Faculty of Sciences and Technology of the Technological University of Panama and the Panama Saludable Foundation for technical assistance.

## ATTACHMENTS

- Slides and Photos  
<https://nutritiondialogues.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/12/Nutrition-Dialogues-Ngabe-Buble.pptx>