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DIALOGUE TITLE	Dialogue with religious leaders
DATE OF DIALOGUE	Monday, August 25, 2025 3:52 PM GMT +01:00
SUMMONED BY	<p>Abdoulwahab Alassane</p> <p>Event announced on behalf of the organizer by: {advertiser_name}. {explanation}</p> <p>Feedback published on behalf of the organizer by: Abdoulwahab Alassane.</p> <p>Professional capacity role and technical support</p>
LANGUAGE OF THE EVENT	Francais
HOST PLACE	Zinder, Niger
GEOGRAPHIC SCOPE	Community level
AFFILIATIONS	World vision
EVENT PAGE OF DIALOGUE	https://nutritiondialogues.org/fr/dialogue/59685/



SECTION ONE: PARTICIPATION

TOTAL NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS	25
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PARTICIPATION BY AGE GROUP

0 0-11	0 12-18	0 19-29
10 30-49	15 50-74	0 75+

PARTICIPATION BY SEX

0 Female	25 Male	0 Other/Prefer not to say
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NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS FROM EACH STAKEHOLDER GROUP

1 Children, youth groups and students	0 Civil society organizations (including consumer groups and organizations environmental)
0 Educators and Teachers	25 Religious Leaders/Religious Communities
0 Financial institutions and technical partners	0 Food producers (including farmers)
0 Health professionals	0 Indigenous peoples
0 Information and Technology Providers	0 Large food companies and retailers
0 Marketing and Advertising Experts	0 Government officials and representatives national/federal
0 News and Media (e.g. journalists)	0 Parents and Caregivers
0 Science and Universities	0 Small/Medium Businesses
0 Government officials and representatives local/sous-national	0 United Nations
0 Women's Groups	0 Other (please specify)

OTHER STAKEHOLDER GROUPS

ADDITIONAL DETAILS ON PARTICIPANT DIVERSITY

The religious leaders who participated in this workshop came from the ten intervention villages of the Operation Area of Tirmini. The group was composed mainly of Muslim religious leaders, all male. active in their communities. Most of them have already participated in the workshop on the Islamic and Christian argument of fight against food insecurity and malnutrition.

SECTION TWO: FRAMING AND DISCUSSION

MANAGEMENT

This workshop was carried out thanks to the support of the Interreligious Dialogue Committee (CDIR) and the collaboration of the Tirmini Town Hall, which contributed to the mobilization of religious leaders and made the Town Hall room available for this important activity. The list of participants was provided by the Secretary General of the Town Hall, who was also responsible for informing all participants. It should be noted that the smooth running of the workshop was facilitated by the experience gained from conducting similar activities with children. Furthermore, religious leaders, already familiar with training organized by World Vision, particularly in the context of its community interventions, actively participated in the workshop with strong commitment. The activity was led by World Vision Zinder staff, in charge of child protection, as well as by the focal points for community advocacy (CVA) and for faith and development (F&D).

DISCUSSION

After a brief presentation of the country's context on nutrition, causes and consequences, the workshop participants are encouraged to contribute to addressing the various problems the country faces by answering the following questions. What are the problems? What are the ways to address these problems?

SECTION THREE: DIALOGUE RESULTS

CHALLENGES

During the nutrition dialogue, religious leaders identified several major challenges hindering the improvement of the nutritional situation in their communities. Economically, they highlighted the lack of fertilizers, the lack of modern labor resources and technologies, the lack of donor support, poverty, soil degradation, and the lack of arable land. At the sociocultural level, they highlighted ignorance, a lack of awareness, a lack of mastery of agricultural techniques, insufficient sanitation, and attitudes such as laziness. The lack of groundwater was also cited as a major constraint to agricultural production. From a religious perspective, they believe that these difficulties also reflect a weakening of Islamic values such as work, cleanliness, responsibility, and solidarity, thus calling for spiritual and community mobilization to address these challenges in a collective and sustainable manner.

URGENT ACTIONS

Following the dialogue, Muslim religious leaders urgently recommended strengthening community awareness about nutrition, taking into account local sociocultural realities, combating ignorance through child education and the dissemination of appropriate messages through sermons and religious talks. They called on communities to work hard, develop agriculture through the use of fertilizers and off-season crops, promote livestock farming and small businesses to improve household incomes, and seek the support of partners to support these initiatives. Drawing on the teachings of Islam, they emphasize the importance of prayer, faith, solidarity, and individual and collective responsibility to combat poverty and sustainably improve the nutritional situation of populations.

AREAS OF DIVERGENCE

During the dialogue, several differences of opinion emerged among the religious leaders, reflecting the richness of the discussions but also the varied perceptions of local realities. The first point of debate concerned the issue of external support. For some participants, the support of donors and partners is essential to address the many economic and structural challenges. Conversely, others believe it is time to rely on our own capacities, mobilizing local resources and strengthening community responsibility. A second point of disagreement concerned the availability of arable land. Some leaders consider that the available land is sufficient to meet agricultural needs. However, others emphasize that, given household size and demographic pressure, the arable land is insufficient to allow each family to ensure its food security. Another debate concerned the exploitation of groundwater resources. Some participants believe that there is a real inadequacy of water reserves, limiting agricultural development, particularly off-season crops. Others, however, believe that the real problem lies in inappropriate or inefficient exploitation techniques, rather than in the quantity of water available. Finally, some religious leaders believe that many efforts have already been made for community development, particularly through projects, training, and infrastructure. However, according to them, the real obstacle lies in the lack of community ownership and engagement, which limits the sustainability and impact of the actions undertaken.

GENERAL SUMMARY

The dialogue held with religious leaders from the ten villages in the Tirmini intervention area provided an opportunity to discuss the main challenges related to nutrition, taking into account economic, sociocultural, and religious dimensions. Participants identified several constraints, including the lack of fertilizers, the lack of modern agricultural means, poverty, ignorance, soil degradation, and limited access to water. Divergences of opinion emerged around certain topics: the need or not for external support, the adequacy of arable land in the face of demographic pressure, and the real causes of water shortages (quantity vs. poor use). Despite these differences, the religious leaders made strong recommendations, calling for hard work, strengthening children's education, promoting agriculture, livestock breeding, local trade, encouraging community awareness, and mobilizing spiritual and local resources to address nutritional challenges. They emphasized the importance of community ownership of development actions and reaffirmed their commitment to using their religious influence to raise awareness and support communities towards sustainable well-being.

SECTION FOUR: PRINCIPLES OF ENGAGEMENT AND METHOD

PRINCIPLES OF COMMITMENT

The principle of engagement is based on the demonstrated willingness of religious leaders to actively engage in promoting nutrition within their communities. Aware of their influential and close relationship with the population, they are committed to relaying key messages through sermons, talks, and religious teachings. Their commitment is also reflected in the mobilization of spiritual values such as solidarity, individual and collective responsibility, work, and the preservation of health, in accordance with religious teachings. This commitment aims to strengthen local ownership of development actions and encourage sustainable behavioral changes.

METHOD AND FRAMEWORK

The workshop, organized in collaboration with the CDIR and the Tirmini Town Hall, involved religious leaders familiar with World Vision activities. A PowerPoint presentation accompanied by leaflets helped explain key concepts related to nutrition. The discussions took place in a participatory manner, with focus group and plenary discussions, promoting a rich sharing of information and experiences.

TIPS FOR OTHER CONVENERS

In Niger, it is essential to collaborate with local stakeholders to mobilize participants and, above all, to contextualize the materials, because French-language tools must be adapted to local languages. This facilitates understanding and ownership. It is also important to encourage active participation, respect diverse opinions, and anchor messages in local values.

RETURN FORM: INFORMATION ADDITIONAL

THANKS

We sincerely thank all those who facilitated or participated in the nutrition dialogue, including the City Hall, the Interreligious Dialogue Committee (CDIR), the religious leaders who were central to the discussions, and our cluster colleagues for their support. We also thank the national office for this valuable opportunity for learning and collaboration.

RELEVANT LINKS

- Photos of the event <https://wvi.box.com/s/h6wsxbv26ul0dsg1j55bz20vbnsjv6z5>