



It takes partnerships:

CASE STUDY

LESOTHO

STRENGTHENING GOVERNMENT EFFORTS

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This work would not have been possible without The Partnering Initiative and the excellent collaboration and contributions from World Vision Lesotho, led by Maseisa Ntlama.

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World Vision is a Christian relief, development and advocacy organisation dedicated to working with children, families and communities to overcome poverty and injustice.

www.wvi.org/ittakesaworld

Globally, violence affects half of the world's children and costs the global community up to US\$7 trillion a year, or roughly 8% of global GDP.

Recognising the urgency of the issue, World Vision launched *It takes a world to end violence against children*, a global campaign to raise awareness, improve accountability for commitments and inspire action related to ending violence against children. Given the complex, multi-sectoral nature of the issue, partnerships were identified early on as a key driver for the campaign.

We wanted to learn more and delve deeper into how partnerships enhanced national-level campaigns and achieved desired outcomes for *It takes a world*. So, World Vision conducted semi-structured interviews from July to August of 2018 with focal points from World Vision Armenia, Eswatini and Lesotho and some of their campaign partners.

World Vision's CAMPAIGN STRATEGIC DRIVERS

DRIVEN BY
THE FIELD

LOOKING
OUTWARDS
—
NEW
PARTNERSHIPS
& COALITIONS

FAITH IN
ACTION

CHILDREN
& YOUTH
AS AGENTS
OF CHANGE

MOST
VULNERABLE
IN THE
HARDEST
PLACES

WHOLE OF
WORLD VISION

This is what we learned in Lesotho

PROBLEM | CHILD MARRIAGE

Child marriage is a critical issue in Lesotho. World Vision Lesotho's 2017 ADAPT report¹ identified child marriage as the top national child protection issue in Lesotho, highly correlated to other key issues such as sexual abuse and teenage pregnancy. The Lesotho National Census in 2016 noted that, (a) 24% of women aged 20–24 were married by the age of 18; and (b) 19% of adolescent women aged 15–19 were already mothers/pregnant with their first child.² Given the low birth registration rates (currently at 45%), it is likely that these figures do not reveal the real number of child marriages in the country.

The Children's Protection and Welfare Act (2011) which is one of the key elements of child protection legislation in Lesotho states that a child 'who is being forced to marry' must be 'in need of urgent protection'.³ However, thanks in part to the work of the Children's Shadow Parliament—initiated in 2017 by World Vision Lesotho, UNICEF and the Government of Lesotho—the voices and concerns of children were heard by the policymakers. As a result, the Children's Protection and Welfare Act (2011) is now under review to ensure inclusion of child marriage issues.

CONTEXT | ELEMENTS OF THE COLLABORATIVE ECO-SYSTEM IN LESOTHO

When analysing child marriage in Lesotho, the elements of the collaborative eco-system can be described as follows:

- A** An effective multi-stakeholder collaboration mechanism is in place at the national level for children protection and welfare in the form of a National Advocacy Steering Committee (NASC) and the National Orphans and Vulnerable Children Coordinating Committee (NOCC). This is part of the government structure which reports through the Department of Child Protection Services to the Ministry of Social Development (MOSD).
- B** World Vision Lesotho has a strong track record of partnering on child protection issues with MOSD, the Gender and Child Protection Unit in the Ministry of Police and Public Safety, and UNICEF. Together these four entities also supported the development of the National Advocacy Steering Committee. World Vision Lesotho is the current chair of the committee.
- C** Critically, when World Vision Lesotho began planning for the campaign, the government was also in the process of designing a National Campaign to End Child Marriage as part of a continent-wide call to action on the issue by the African Union (AU).



LESOTHO FACTS

Capital: Maseru

Population: 2.23 million

Area: 30.4 km²

Language: Sesotho, English

Currency: Lesotho loti

¹ ADAPT is a context analysis tool for the purpose of assessment and understanding of the existing situation for a given issue. For child protection, ADAPT mobilises a partnership of actors – both formal and informal – to develop a shared understanding of the 'local' child protection systems and status.

² <https://www.girlsnotbrides.org/child-marriage/lesotho/>

³ Children's Protection and Welfare Act, 2011 http://www.ilo.org/dyn/natlex/natlex4.detail?p_lang=en&p_isn=106492&p_count=5&p_classification=04.01



SOLUTION | THE CAMPAIGN'S PARTNERING APPROACH

In short, the partnering approach which emerged in Lesotho can be summarised as 'merge and build capacity'.

MERGE:

Given the high priority national agenda in place, World Vision Lesotho concluded it would be counter-productive to create a stand-alone campaign. This led to a refocus of their efforts to fully merge with the process to create the National Campaign to End Child Marriage (learn more on page 5). This national campaign was launched in October 2017 in the presence of the Prime Minister and an African Union representative. The national campaign is managed through a collective action model, with the NASC as the governing body. The key issues and intervention areas were identified through the joint ADAPT assessment. Common objectives were determined through a multi-stakeholder design workshop which resulted in a national action plan. These collective actions led to strong ownership and buy-in for the national campaign goals, along with commitment and engagement of time and/or resources from the campaign stakeholders. The action plan identified clear objectives for the year, with a sub-set of actors responsible for coordinating each intervention or set of activities.

BUILD CAPACITY:

World Vision Lesotho and UNICEF are playing a key role in building the capacity of other organisations on partnering, social accountability, and child protection as outlined in the table below. A wide range of organisations – from formal national campaign partners to informal partners and supporters (see text box) have been part of this process which reflects World Vision Lesotho's aim to seek innovative influencers including children, faith leaders, celebrities and influential individuals.

“ The composition of this partnership is different from other partnerships. It's very diverse. [It works at] all levels to get a full picture.

World Vision



NATIONAL CAMPAIGN TO END CHILD MARRIAGE

Goal | Reduced rate/incidence of child marriage for the improved and sustained well-being of boys and girls in Lesotho by 2021 in line with SDG 5.

OBJECTIVES

- Improve protection of boys and girls through effective implementation of child protection laws and policies with a special emphasis on child marriage.
- Reduce cultural practices and risky social behaviours that lead to child marriage, through changing the mindset and attitudes of all the concerned parties.
- Increase resilience of boys and girls to ensure their meaningful participation. Improve household income to reduce children's vulnerability to violence including child marriage.

PARTNERS

- **Civil Society** | World Vision Lesotho, Habitat for Humanity, SOS Children's Village, Lesotho National Federation of Organisations with Disabilities, SHE-HIVE Association
- **UN** | UNICEF
- **Government** | Ministry of Social Development (MOSD), Ministry of Justice and Correctional Service (MOJCS), Ministry of Education and Training, Ministry of Tourism, Environment and Culture, Master of High Court, Police: Child & Gender Protection Unit
- **Media** | Harvest FM Radio Station.

'INFORMAL' PARTNERS AND SUPPORTERS

- **Children/Youth** | in particular the Young Parliamentarians from the Children's Shadow Parliament
- **Civil Society** | Help Lesotho, The Participatory Initiative for Social Accountability
- **Church body** | Christian Council of Lesotho and Council of Pentecostal Churches
- **Royal family champions** | Her Majesty the Queen (National Champion for OVC, and Champion for World Vision on Education), HRH Princess Senate (National Champion on Ending Child Marriage).

BENEFITS AND RESULTS | WHAT WE ACHIEVED AND LEARNED FROM JOINING WITH THE GOVERNMENT'S

From interviews with various stakeholders, key ingredients for the success of the partnering approach in Lesotho were identified and listed below.

This section also outlines how those ingredients contributed to achieving effective collaboration, overcoming challenges and making progress towards the campaign goal..

KEY INGREDIENTS OF THE PARTNERING APPROACH



MORE KEY INGREDIENTS NEXT PAGE

HOW THESE INGREDIENTS CONTRIBUTE TO AN EFFECTIVE PARTNERING FOUNDATION

Many of the campaign's successes mentioned by partners can be attributed to the development of **trust and mutual understanding** developed through the longstanding collaboration between key stakeholders prior to this initiative.

Merging into one overarching national campaign **avoided duplication** of efforts and **enabled broad mobilisation** of organisations.

The joint national campaign gained more **legitimacy** by being part of an African Union campaign to end child marriage.⁴

When partner capabilities are strengthened, the **partnerships they invest in are more impactful**. Recognising this, World Vision Lesotho (and other partners) invested in several key areas:

- Whilst the core organisations have a strong history of partnering together, they wanted to share a common understanding of partnering across a wider range of stakeholders. So a **partnering training**, facilitated by World Vision International, was held ahead of the campaign design and action planning workshop.
- World Vision Lesotho, along with other key stakeholders from the National Advocacy Steering Committee, **jointly conducted an ADAPT (Analysis Design and Planning Tool)⁵ assessment**, which identified and analysed child protection issues and the system in Lesotho. This data fed into the overall project design.
- World Vision Lesotho provided **social accountability (using Citizen Voice & Action⁶) training** to several organisations. This input, for example, enabled the police to engage sensitively and confidently with communities and increase the effectiveness of their messages.

Similarly, World Vision and UNICEF's capacity building support to the Ministry, **enabled the government to play an active role in community sensitisation**.

⁴ <https://au.int/en/sa/cecm>

⁵ See footnote # 1

⁶ <https://www.wvi.org/meero/publication/citizen-voice-and-action-model>

A FLEXIBLE APPROACH

to the use of logos

Reflecting the strong, multi-sectoral approach, the campaign initiatives are being implemented jointly by World Vision Lesotho, UNICEF and Ministry of Social Development. As a result, the **logos for these three entities are included** in most of the campaign's Information, Education, and Communication (IEC) materials (e.g. billboards).

African Union campaign branding is used in Ministerial Pledges, whilst other national campaign documents include the logos of the relevant government ministries, World Vision Lesotho, UNICEF, and in some cases Help Lesotho, testifying to the key role of those partners in driving the campaign.

It takes a world branding is maintained for specific inputs – e.g. World Vision policy briefs on child marriage.

CONCERTED STRATEGY

efforts and joint interventions between multiple stakeholders across technical sectors, sectors of society, levels, and geography

This is the only effective way to tackle this deeply complex and multi-sectoral problem. The national campaign brings together the **complementary resources, expertise and different entry points into the community** of a range of actors at a national, district, and local level.

In addition, the national campaign is intentionally engaging actors to reach as **high a geographic coverage** as possible to reflect a genuinely national campaign.

AN EMPHASIS ON STRONG RELATIONSHIP

with, and mobilisation of, communities

The national campaign is not only about policy change but **shifting social norms** as well. A key World Vision Lesotho 'value-add' was identified as supporting other actors, such as law enforcement/ministries of government/other NGOs in gaining **influence among communities** and with community leaders.

Acknowledging the **critical role of faith communities** at the local level, World Vision Lesotho's identity as a Christian organisation, the Christian Council of Lesotho, and the Council of Pentecostal Churches are recognised as key actors enabling effective links to faith communities and their leaders.

ENABLING CHILD PARTICIPATION

and children's voices

The ability to **amplify and promote the voices and input of children** increased the campaign's effectiveness and legitimacy.

World Vision Lesotho, UNICEF and the Ministry of Social Development's work to support **child participation**, through the National Shadow Children's Parliament, creating an environment for children to become effective actors to influence change.

FIND OUT ABOUT OUR PROGRESS TOWARDS THE GOAL
NEXT PAGE

PROGRESS TOWARDS THE GOAL

The merger of processes into one national campaign with all key organisations involved paved the way for the engagement of HRH Princess Senate as a champion for the campaign. Her participation is a testament to the power of a group of partners raising the profile of the campaign sufficiently to attract influential champions and ambassadors of the campaign.

Through the joint advocacy efforts of multiple partners and the high profile of the campaign, the stakeholders have successfully advocated for increased budget allocation in the Ministry of Social Development from US\$16.2 million to US\$17.6 million to enhance the National Campaign to end child marriage.

Finally, work led by World Vision, UNICEF and the Ministry of Social Development on child participation, in particular through the National Shadow Children's Parliament, created an environment for children to become effective agents of change in the campaign, which has begun to shape policy via possible amendments to the Children's Protection and Welfare Act.



EMERGING CHALLENGE

The collaboration between partners at the national level through the NASC stakeholder group is strong, embodying core partnering principles of mutual benefit, equity and transparency, as these relationships have matured over some considerable time. However, partnering relationships and coordination between stakeholders at other levels and outside of this group still needs to be strengthened through the investment of effective partnering brokering and partnership management. In addition, further investments are needed to develop collaborative relationships at regional and local levels. There is a key role here for the District Child Protection Teams (DCPT) which exist in all 10 districts of Lesotho under the leadership of the Ministry of Social Development. These DCPTs must be supported so that they can participate meaningfully in ensuring effective implementation of the campaign initiatives at the local and district level in a comprehensive and sustainable manner.



WHAT'S NEXT FOR THE CAMPAIGN IN LESOTHO

Various stakeholders noted that some key partnership management issues need to be jointly addressed to ensure future success. These include, for example, joint resource mobilisation and detailed agreements for pooled funding. Also, there is a need to create joint review processes and key performance indicators.

Partners also flagged the need to ensure that collaborative efforts do not focus only at the national level but are strengthened at both regional and national levels. Agreements and commitments need to be cascaded down. At the same time, ensuring alignment and raising awareness needs to occur at different levels. This includes supporting and resourcing community and regional level relationships.

Some interviewees flagged the importance of ensuring that the national coordination mechanisms provide a forum for all partners to participate equally in shaping the agenda and planning, as well as to share their varying perspectives on the campaign's progress. This will ensure increased inclusion, equity and co-creation. It will also allow for diverse perspectives and expertise from all partners to be truly reflected in the campaign's evolution as well as its inception.

Finally, a joint systematic review of shared results is not in place and presents challenges. Each partner has their own internal review mechanism but are working towards a harmonised and shared review system of indicators to assess the results of the joint national campaign.

“ The most important aspect is bringing in the child participation component into the whole process of the campaign. World Vision have done this throughout the campaign, making sure we have child participation in our community dialogue, children who are vocal about the issues, talk to elders, and raise awareness to parliamentarians.

Ministry of Social Development

“ Normally if you do something alone, people will often not attend – you will get 15 people at a public gathering. But with the other stakeholders, UN, NGO, etc. people will come and listen to what you are saying.

...

The partnership might end, but this is not a short-term project for us, because we are really focused on child protection as our primary objectives, and we will continue this with the skills we have gained through the partnership.

Child and Gender Protection Unit, Police



For more information regarding *It takes a world*:

wvi.org/ittakesaworld

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World Vision 

 **It takes a world**
to end violence against children