



Faith-Based and Values-Based Approach for Child Well-Being

World Vision seeks meaningful partnerships with various faith actors across the Asia-Pacific region to ensure that progress made in community development has greater reach, and is more sustainable, as these leaders embody a long-term presence and commitment to their communities. We work with all who share our common values of compassion, love, mercy and our commitment to the well-being of children and to the poor.

Asia-Pacific is the most populous and religious region in the world¹. Religion and values assert a strong social influence within most societies and they play a significant role in guiding the thoughts, priorities and actions of communities.

Faith leaders are uniquely placed to protect and meet the needs of the most vulnerable in their communities. This is because their reach that is often greater than non-governmental organisations and even governments. With deep and trusted relationships and links with their communities, faith leaders are essential for community transformation and are key partners in our work; they are gatekeepers, endorsers, and translators of development projects.

People belonging to an organised religion are projected to increase to 87% in 2050². World Vision's grassroots presence and faith-based approach is well-placed to bring people of all faiths (or no faith) together to collaborate on community empowerment.

In 2020, in the **Asia Pacific region**, World Vision worked with more than **30,000 faith leaders** from different faith traditions in strengthening family life, encouraging positive discipline, imparting life skills and nurturing value formation for children, promoting health and nutrition, facilitating psychosocial support and trauma counselling, inspiring disability inclusion, attending to water and sanitation concerns and putting in place early childhood education and livelihood opportunities.



¹ <https://www.theguardian.com/news/2018/aug/27/religion-why-is-faith-growing-and-what-happens-next>

² Pew Research Center. (2015, April 2). The Future of World Religions: Population Growth Projections, 2010-2050. Retrieved May 5, 2021, from Pew Research Center website: <https://www.pewforum.org/2015/04/02/religious-projections-2010-2050/>



The Impact of our Inter-Faith Engagement

Our inter-faith engagement has impacted the lives of more than 1.4 million children. We address various detrimental practices, including child labour, early child marriage, discrimination against the girl child and gender-based violence. We encourage the protection of children within each of the community's distinct worship spaces in churches, mosques, temples and monasteries.

We build bridges of understanding and service for the common good of communities where we work irrespective of their faith. Through the influence of faith leaders, we aim to motivate change in thinking, foster dialogue, set priorities for their communities, ensure increasing competency of their faith community to meet the wider community needs.

- In **Indonesia**, 1,603 faith leaders were trained to provide psychosocial support to their faith communities affected by Covid-19. The training resulted in increased community resilience. Faith leaders were involved in helping communities cope with the impact of Covid-19, resulting in increased levels of community members supporting one another, especially for the most vulnerable.
- In Cox's Bazaar, **Bangladesh**, 330 faith leaders from 10 camps were mobilised to speak out against child abuse and exploitation in the refugee camps. In addition, 70 Imams and influential women participated in a three-day workshop to examine and reflect on their cultural and religious beliefs that can help prevent child marriage.
- In **Myanmar**, the **Philippines**, **India** and **Indonesia**, online mental health and psychosocial support training was conducted for faith leaders to support the vulnerable in the community during the COVID-19 pandemic and to ensure the safety and protection of children. Following the training, faith leaders played a key role in supporting parents to provide a safe and nurturing environment for children to thrive. Children developed better resilience and went on to help others in the community, especially the most vulnerable. Faith leaders also supported parents to cope with situations of psychosocial distress caused by the loss of livelihoods and of food security. They do this through counseling vulnerable families, using religious services (such as Sunday worship services for Christians and Friday prayers for Muslims) to reach their congregation with messages of hope and encouragement, and influencing existing support groups that have been put in place through the Celebrating Families and Channels of Hope programmes.
- Across the **Asia Pacific region**, 4,678 faith leaders of different faith traditions disseminated messages to the community on COVID-19 prevention and the protection of children against violence. Faith leaders also equipped their faith communities with good hygiene practices, such as hand washing and social distancing, and also partnered with local authorities to provide food and rations for severely affected members in the community.



In 2018, the Centre for Trust, Peace and Social Relations at Coventry University conducted three in-depth, qualitative studies of Celebrating Families, focusing on implementation of the programme across a diverse set of contexts in Afghanistan, Myanmar and Tanzania. According to the study³, there is strong evidence in **Myanmar** that Celebrating Families is having a positive impact at the family level. It has challenged cultural, social and gender norms that are harmful to family relationships, especially in parenting, and the physical and spiritual nurture of children.

In addressing gender-based violence in the **Solomon Islands**, researchers from the University of Queensland and Australian National University on the Channels of Hope for Gender projects concluded that the positive change attributed to the projects was considerable. The studies revealed that there was increased knowledge about the role of women in decision-making and an increased level of commitment by faith leaders and community members to tackle gender-based violence. A multi-country longitudinal study on Channels of Hope to address violence against children is underway and aims to end in 2021. Preliminary results show that as a result of CoH workshops, harmful views about child marriage decreased markedly. Faith leaders and community members experienced positive changes in their attitudes about norms around child discipline and the majority of faith.

In Mandalay, community members and leaders participating in the Celebrating Families programme mentioned that they had initiated child protection activities over the last year. This is a strong indication that Channels of Hope is changing mindsets, attitudes and behaviours towards increasing the well-being of children.

³ Coventry University. (2018). Understanding 'Celebrating Families' contribution to family wellbeing: Key Findings from Myanmar. World Vision International. https://www.wvi.org/sites/default/files/2019-11/Celebrating%20Families%20Case%20Study_Myanmar_QMU_0.pdf



“I learned from my own story about the past. When my youngest son was three months old, there was a conflict in the country and I couldn’t bear it. I neglected my children and family.

Before participating in Celebrating Families, even the children were not even a thought in my mind. But now, I try to give them time to talk and they feel they are in my heart.”

Community member and Celebrating Families participant in Mandalay



Our Faith-Based and Values-Based Programmes

World Vision has developed faith-based and values-based models and approaches that tackle the root causes of poverty and injustice and is an effective driver of transformational change in communities, leading to sustained improvements in child well-being. We build upon the community's cultural norms and belief systems to affirm life-giving practices and address harmful practices. This approach seeks to strengthen the foundation for long-term sustainable changes in the community.

These project models and approaches focus on creating an environment of mutual respect for community members to engage in informed faith-based conversations on taboo topics such as abuse, exploitation, and acts of religious and gender-based violence.

- **Channels of Hope (CoH)** is World Vision's program model to empower faith leaders and communities to address sensitive issues. World Vision has adapted the CoH model to address challenging issues such as gender relations, HIV/AIDS, Ebola, maternal and child health, child protection, and more recently, COVID-19 vaccine acceptance.

In Solomon Islands, World Vision partners churches to implement the Channels of Hope programme to address gender-based violence and other related gender issues to transform the lives of families and communities.

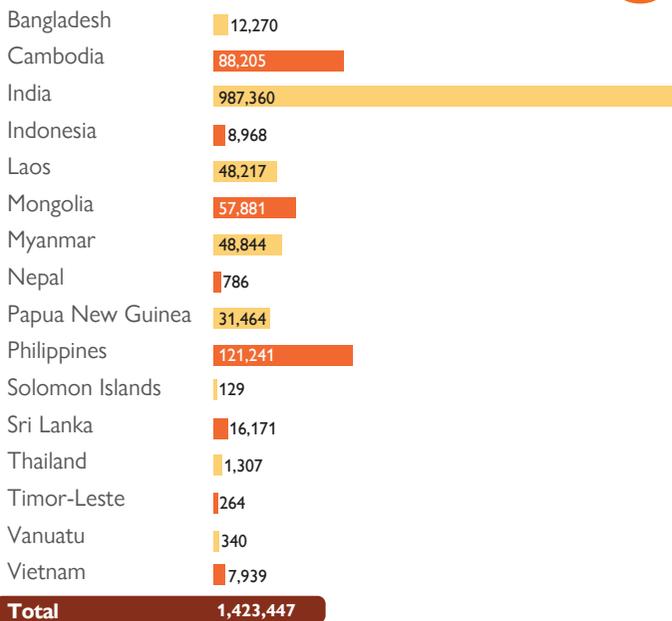
- **Celebrating Families**, a model focused on positive parenting, seeks to provide the knowledge and skills for a caregiver to learn to parent with love, warmth, and respect rather than harsh and punitive parenting techniques. Such nurturing environments support the well-being of children so that each child can experience life to the full.

In Myanmar, Celebrating Families is implemented alongside other programmes and also often integrated with interventions such as child protection, education and livelihoods. The Celebrating Families programme has not only improved relationships between parents and children, but also enhanced relations between spouses.

- **Empowered Worldview (EWW)** seeks to address worldviews and mindsets that will help communities to move away from fatalism and dependency. Instead the communities are empowered to take personal responsibility as they grow in understanding of their worth and value. This leads the community to identify creative ways to address problems they face and to better steward the environment. Initially used in the livelihood sector, EWW resulted in improved farming methods and increased income. EWW is now also supporting other sectors.

World Vision is incorporating EWW principles into a livelihoods project in the Vidarbha area of India. These communities suffer from high rates of suicide among farmers due to drought and failed crops.

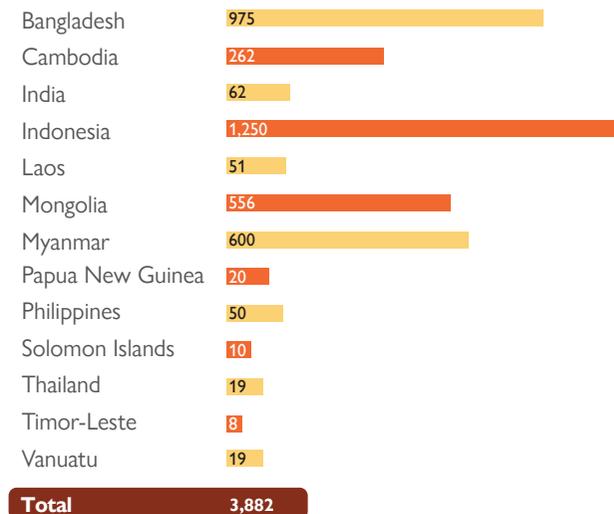
Children reached through faith-based and values-based approaches



Faith leaders engaged to support and promote the well-being of children



Faith-based organisations participating in programming focused on improving well-being of children



Faith-based and Values-based Approaches Integrated in Sectors



Sectors

- Addressing child marriage
- Disaster management
- Education
- Peacebuilding
- Disability inclusion
- Health & nutrition
- WASH
- Addressing gender-based violence
- Livelihoods
- Life skills education/holistic nurture of children
- Strengthening families

OUR DONORS



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