

FAITH-SENSITIVE, CHILD AND COMMUNITY-LED PROGRAMMING

World Vision 



in Albania, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Georgia and Armenia

WHY

To overcome poverty and harmful behaviours individuals need to address their most foundational convictions, which often are rooted in their faith. People's religious beliefs influence how they view their ability to change their circumstances and break free of poverty or contribute to social change.



WHAT

We mobilise people who share common values of compassion, love and mercy and want to change children's lives and their rights-based participation. As a Christian organisation, we seek to achieve this goal together with others in places where children are the most vulnerable, through empowerment, advocacy and partnering approaches.

HOW

World Vision's faith identity and community-empowering focus has allowed us to establish trusted relationships with influential local faith actors and faith-based organizations (FBOs), who provide significant services to communities, even in the most remote places. World Vision's Country Offices engage diverse faith leaders and faith communities to address barriers to children's rights and well-being (such as in the areas of gender equality, child rights and protection or health) as a powerful driver for changing harmful social norms.

World Vision's work with children, families and communities in Eastern Europe through faith-sensitive, child-centred, and community-led programming supports children's well-being and strengthens social cohesion and family resilience. By engaging trusted faith-based actors, World Vision enhances reach, sustainability, and locally led change in contexts affected by poverty, social exclusion, and fragility. Our impact areas include:



Strengthened and equitable parenting and family relationships for vulnerable households



Improved resilience, self-efficacy and life skills for vulnerable children and adolescents; and



Reduced harmful social norms and stigma affecting children, women and persons living with disabilities



Sustained change and local ownership through partnerships with faith leaders and national faith-based organisations.



FAITH-BASED PARTNERSHIPS OVERVIEW



Across Eastern Europe, World Vision Country Offices work with their diverse networks of faith-based partners, including Christian and Muslim religious communities, faith leaders, and interfaith structures, to address the root causes of child vulnerability and improve social cohesion.

In **Albania**, World Vision has worked with 21 churches and faith-based organisations across multiple Christian traditions to implement family strengthening, youth participation, and children's spiritual development initiatives, funded by World Vision's private resources.

In **Bosnia and Herzegovina**, the EU-funded 'United in Faith' (EU #2023/452-056; Euros 300.000) initiative enabled structured collaboration with religious communities, brought together through the Interreligious Council, engaging, for the first time, faith leaders and representatives from 16 religious communities on gender-based violence prevention.

In **Armenia** and **Georgia**, faith-based partnerships are founded in long-standing collaboration with national and local church structures and faith leaders, supporting positive parenting programmes, spiritual nurture activities, and community-led initiatives for cross-cultural integration (e.g. "Reinforcing Child Welfare and Protection System in Georgia (RCWP), # NEAR-TS-2019-414-075, Feb'2019 – May'2022, 1.6 Million EURO).



WHY FAITH-SENSITIVE APPROACHES MATTER

Across Eastern Europe, faith actors play an important role in shaping social norms, supporting families, and reaching the most vulnerable children. World Vision integrates faith-sensitive approaches into its child-focused, evidence-informed programming to address the context-specific drivers of vulnerability, including social norms that may limit children's well-being, gaps in access to information and social fragmentation. This approach supports World Vision's priorities on localisation, social cohesion, and inclusive community engagement, while respecting freedom of belief and adhering to Do-No-Harm principles.



HOW FAITH CONTRIBUTES TO WORLD VISION'S IMPACT

Faith-sensitive programming contributes to child well-being through four interconnected pathways:

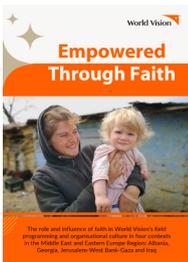
- 1) **Child Right's implementation** through supporting children and adolescents to build life skills, resilience and positive identity, and to access safe, supportive environments.
- 2) **Equipping caregivers** and families to strengthen positive parenting, healthier and more equitable family relationships and reduced acceptance of harmful practices affecting children, women, and persons living with disabilities.
- 3) Working with trusted community and faith leaders to **shift harmful social norms** (e.g. norms related to GBV, women economic activity, girl's education), strengthen protective environments for children, and promote social cohesion.
- 4) **Achieving sustainable and integrated changes** through locally led partnerships and inclusive community leadership.

EVIDENCE OF IMPACT



REACH:

In 2025, faith-sensitive activities reached more than **20,000 adolescents and young people** of Eastern Europe.



World Vision's study on the value of faith-sensitive adolescents and parenting programming showcased:

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Strong contribution to adolescents' developmental assets:

75% of Albanian and **79%** of Georgian children, who participated in World Vision's projects, with good or high external asset scores (support, empowerment, boundaries, constructive use of time) reported that World Vision's faith-sensitive activities directly contributed to these outcomes.

Significant gains in internal assets linked to life skills and identity:

82% of project participant children in Albania, with good or high internal asset scores (commitment to learning, positive values, social competencies, positive identity), attributed these gains to World Vision activities. Among Georgian adolescents, **83%** project participants showed good or high internal assets across all four domains, and **30%** explicitly recognised World Vision's role in strengthening these outcomes.

Positive parenting practices strengthened at scale:

100% of surveyed project participant caregivers in Albania and in Georgia demonstrated fair or good positive parenting skills, and **84%** and **82%**, respectively, attributed these improvements to World Vision parenting training, delivered by their trusted faith leaders.



Case study:

UNITED IN FAITH IN BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

The EU funded “United in [Faith to End Violence Against Children and Gender-Based Violence project](#)” (EU #2023/452-056; Euros 300.000) was implemented by World Vision Bosnia and Herzegovina, in partnership with the Interreligious Council of Bosnia and Herzegovina, from December 2022 to December 2024, across 16 local communities and four religious dominations (Jewish, Orthodox, Catholic, Muslim). The project pioneered structured engagement of religious communities and children and youth to prevent violence against children (VAC) and gender-based violence (GBV) through awareness raising, education, research, advocacy, and locally led initiatives. It combined **capacity-building for religious leaders and faith-based actors** with the **mobilisation of children and youth**, including the establishment of a formalised **Women Believers’ Network**, enabling coordinated, multi-faith action for the first time in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The final evaluation confirmed the central role of faith actors as credible, trusted partners advancing child rights, gender equality, and EU human rights values, while creating sustainable platforms for continued prevention and advocacy beyond the project lifecycle.

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For further information please contact:

Nikica Lubura Reljic
Faith & Development Advisor
nikica_reljic@wvi.org

Evita Jourdi
Regional Advocacy
Policy & External Engagement Senior Advisor
evita_jourdi@wvi.org

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