



**2025
SOUTH ASIA & PACIFIC
REGIONAL CHILD PARTICIPATION
IN WORLD VISION
DECISION-MAKING REPORT**

South Asia Pacific Region

World Vision Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, Nepal, Philippines,
Papua New Guinea, Sri Lanka, Solomon Islands, Timor-Leste, Vanuatu

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Acknowledgements

This report would not have been possible without the efforts of Paul Stephenson of Stephenson Consulting who analysed Field Office (FO) reports from the South Asia & Pacific (SAP) Region and put together the findings for this 2025 Regional Child Participation in World Vision Decision-Making Report. Staff from the SAP Regional Office were also instrumental in providing technical support for FOs and shepherding the reporting processes.

World Vision staff in each of the countries of this region also worked diligently to gather the data and findings for each of the FO reports and strive each day to engage children meaningfully in World Vision programming, advocacy, and decision making.

Introduction

World Vision is committed to supporting and strengthening children's meaningful participation in all decisions that affect their lives, including and especially in World Vision's own decision-making processes that affect children at local, national, regional and global levels. Ensuring that children have a say in projects and programmes that affect their lives and empowering them to take action on issues that they care about is a cornerstone of World Vision's identity and child-focused programming.

This regional report provides high-level insight on the child participation reporting and data from the countries in the South Asia & Pacific Region who submitted their annual FO report in 2025 (Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, Nepal, Philippines, Papua New Guinea, Sri Lanka, Solomon Islands, Timor-Leste, Vanuatu). These FO reports are produced annually as part of the organisation's Operational Requirements for Child Participation in World Vision Decision-Making, summarising an office's local and national level child participation practices, data, and perspectives from boys and girls. It also digs deeper into how child participation is making an impact on children, local communities, and World Vision, giving the Region and FOs more insight into what practices to strengthen and what areas to target for improvement.

Note: Please note that the following sections draw only from data and examples that were reported in the office's annual child participation in decision-making report from FY25. Each office report follows the same general structure, but some offices provide more or less information about their child participation efforts at their discretion. Therefore, this regional report may not capture the breadth of the region's child participation work in full.



Section 1: What do children think is going well in World Vision programming?

Based on the FY 2025 reports from various field offices, children identify the following themes as areas where World Vision (WV) programming is going well. The ranking is based on the frequency with which these themes were explicitly highlighted as successful interventions or positive impacts across the 10 national reports provided.

1. Child Participation, leadership, and advocacy

Times Mentioned: 10 out of 10 reports

Why it is going well: Children consistently report that WV provides platforms, such as Child Forums and Impact+ Clubs, that build their confidence, public speaking skills, and ability to influence local leaders. In Sri Lanka, children's societies were identified as transformative in 100% of the 27 Area Programs (APs).

- **Bangladesh (Girl):** *"I was very shy before and couldn't hold a conversation properly. But now I can hold discussions even with the Union Parishad and freely talk about my rights thanks to Child Forum."*
—Ripa Akter, President of AP Level Child Forum.
- **Solomon Islands:** Children expressed that these committees *"strengthened their confidence to communicate with adults and community leaders"*.
- **Philippines (Girl):** *"We, the children and youth, carry a unique ability to prove that we are not just children, but powerful voices capable of creating change..."* — Venise, 16, Visayas.

2. Child protection and ending violence

Times Mentioned: 9 out of 10 reports

Why it is going well: Programming has empowered children to identify risks and successfully advocate against harmful practices like child marriage, child labour, and physical abuse. In Bangladesh, children's efforts led to over 2,200 villages being declared Child Marriage Free.

- **Nepal (Girl):** *"Society has created a role for daughters—that they should not go out or speak up... [I] broke that cycle and [am] now leading a wave of change..."* — Susma, Udayapur AP " (see photo).
- **India (Girl):** Girls specifically highlighted that self-defense sessions were *"highly relevant to their daily lives"* and helped them feel safer.



3. Health, nutrition, and WASH (Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene)

Times Mentioned: 8 out of 10 reports

Why it is going well: Children appreciate improved access to clean water, nutritious food, and health services like immunizations.

- **Vanuatu:** *"WV helps our school after the cyclone. They fix the water and bring tanks"* (see photo).
- **Papua New Guinea (Girl):** *"It was through the involvement of World Vision that we now know more about the importance of hand washing and how it can prevent us from getting sick..."* — Grade 7 student, WASH Club Member.



4. Education support and learning enrichment

Times Mentioned: 7 out of 10 reports

Why it is going well: Remedial classes, reading camps, and digital learning tools have helped children improve their academic performance and interest in school. In **India**, Remedial Education Classes (RECs) were praised for significantly increasing awareness of education.

- **India (Girl):** *“Everyone supported me... it was in that class that I truly discovered my talent.”* — Anjana, 8th Grade.

5. Livelihood and economic empowerment

Times Mentioned: 7 out of 10 reports

Why it is going well: Children recognize that supporting their parents' income directly improves their own well-being, nutrition, and ability to stay in school. In Sri Lanka, livelihood initiatives were recognized as successful in all 27 APs.

- **Papua New Guinea (Boy):** *“Before this project, most of us had nothing to do... now, we have something to focus on. We’re learning, we’re working together, and we’re building something that can last.”* — Youth Participant, crab farming project.
- **Timor-Leste:** Boys specifically appreciated *“livelihood opportunities like farming and savings groups”*.



Section 2. What do children say could be improved about World Vision programming?

Children across the region identified several key areas where World Vision (WV) can improve its programming and operations. The findings are ranked below by the frequency of mention across the 10 national reports.

1. Equity and inclusion (children with disabilities & remote areas)

Times Mentioned: 9 out of 10 reports

What needs improvement: Children consistently call for better access to programmes for those in geographically isolated areas and more specialized support for children with disabilities. Barriers include language, poor infrastructure, and a lack of child-friendly facilities.

- **Timor-Leste (Girl with Disability):** "Until now, child with disability is only involved as participant in most of community and school activity. I hope people will not act harshly toward child with disability".
- **Bangladesh (Mother of child with a disability):** "I feel like someone is finally giving the well-deserved importance to my child. But I feel he needs more easy access to education and in the community".

2. Deeper participation in decision-making

Times Mentioned: 7 out of 10 reports

What needs improvement: Children want to move beyond being consulted to becoming co-creators who design, implement, and monitor projects. They also noted a need for more consistent feedback loops so they know how their ideas influenced final decisions.

- **Sri Lanka (14-year-old Girl):** "When we share our ideas, adults now listen and help us make them real... we learned that even children can change something in the community if we work together".
- **Philippines (Boy):** "It's important to listen to the voices of children because they are directly affected, bring fresh ideas, and can help create meaningful solutions." — Robert, Child Leader.

3. Mental health and psychosocial support

Times Mentioned: 6 out of 10 reports

What needs improvement: There is a high demand for increased access to counselling, child-friendly safe spaces for healing, and programs addressing social pressure and mental health.

- **Vanuatu (Boy):** "I remember looking at the cards. When it was my turn, I picked up the card about feeling 'alone'... The teachers listened... They helped me understand that it was okay and even good to share my feelings".



4. Advanced child protection (online safety & substance abuse)

Times Mentioned: 6 out of 10 reports

There is a call for WV to expand its reach to the most vulnerable and to ensure that participation isn't limited to a selected few.

What needs improvement: Children are increasingly concerned about emerging threats, specifically online abuse (OSAEC), cybercrime, drug prevention, and substance use. They requested secure, child-friendly digital tools for communication.

- **PNG (Girl and boy):** Daniel and Lana urged for "Advanced digital literacy and Online Protection" and "more robust child protection and Justice Systems".

5. Economic empowerment for families

Times Mentioned: 6 out of 10 reports (Sri Lanka, Nepal, PNG, Vanuatu, Timor-Leste, Philippines).

What needs improvement: Children recognize that their well-being is tied to their family's financial stability. They recommend scaling livelihood support and economic opportunities to reduce child labour and vulnerability during disasters.

- **PNG (Girl):** "When no food or basic needs, violence occurs and homes are not safe for children."
— Erica Lana, 17.

Section 3: How are children participating in advocacy?

Children participate in advocacy across various levels—from local village committees to international summits—to influence policies, laws, budgets, and service provision. The following ranking highlights the primary advocacy issues and activities based on the frequency and depth of child engagement reported in the FO reports.

1. Local government budgeting and planning

Children are increasingly involved in formal government processes to ensure resources are allocated to child-friendly services.

Type: Consultative and collaborative participation.

Spaces & Levels: Village and Sub-district Development Planning (Musrenbang in Indonesia), Child Congresses (Nepal), and Union Parishad budget dialogues (Bangladesh).

Examples:

- In **Nepal**, 1,563 children advocated for child-friendly local governance, leading to **11 wards** being declared child-friendly.
- In **Bangladesh**, children draft and submit budget petitions to local government bodies for specific child-friendly services.
- **Indonesia (Girl):** Two girls from the Nagekeo Child Forum successfully advocated for the inclusion of child forum activity budgets in the village fund.

2. Ending violence and harmful practices

Children advocate for legal changes and community-wide status shifts to end child marriage, child labour, and physical abuse.

Type: Child-led campaigns and high-level policy dialogues.

Spaces & Levels: National forums, provincial dialogues with MPs (Solomon Islands), and village-level monitoring (Bangladesh).

Examples:

- **Bangladesh's "5 Zero"** initiative empowered children to identify peers at risk, resulting in over 2,200 villages being declared Child Marriage Free.
 - o *"When I spoke in front of my community about why girls should not marry early, people actually listened... we have the right to dream before marriage."* — Monika, **Bangladesh**.
- In the **Solomon Islands**, children advocated for increasing the legal minimum age of marriage from 15 to 18 years.

3. Health, nutrition, and service provision (ENOUGH Campaign)

Children monitor and influence the quality of government services, particularly regarding nutrition and school meals.

Type: Citizen Voice and Action (CVA) sessions and child-led research (CLR).

Spaces & Levels: Global summits (Paris, Manila), national research dissemination (Indonesia), and local government scorecards (India).

Examples:

- In **Indonesia**, children conducted CLR on the government's Free Nutritious Meals (MBG) program, providing recommendations on food variety and hygiene.
- In **Nepal**, Sunischita (a girl child) represented Nepal at the global Nutrition for Growth summit in Paris.
- **Bangladesh (Boy):** *"Before CVA conduction, Government Officers didn't give much importance to our needs, but now... I feel that the Government Officials hear our voices with attention."* — Printo Baccar, Bangladesh.

4. Climate action and disaster risk reduction (DRR)

Children are shaping national policies and community resilience plans to address environmental threats.

Type: Policy formulation and intergenerational dialogues.

Spaces & Levels: National Loss and Damage Forums (Solomon Islands), COP30, and participatory mapping (Timor-Leste).

Examples:

- In the **Solomon Islands**, children helped shape the nation's first-ever Loss and Damage Policy.
- In **Timor-Leste**, youth partnered with G-SIG to use geospatial technology for disaster mapping in over 20 communities.
- **Bangladesh (Boy):** *"In our community 160 of us took training on disaster management... youth have been empowered in different ways."* — Akash Mojumder, Bangladesh.



Children who participated in the loss and damage forum

5. National and international strategic influence

Children are invited to share their perspectives to influence the high-level strategic direction of World Vision and global entities.

Type: Child Advisory Councils (CAC) and Board-level consultations.

Spaces & Levels: World Vision Triennial Council, Country Strategy consultations (India, Philippines, Nepal), and UN side events.

Examples:

- **India:** 7,875 children contributed to the New Country Strategy consultation, presenting recommendations directly to the National Director and Senior Leadership.
- **Sri Lanka:** Himanshi (see photo), a 15-year-old leader, interviewed the Regional Director of UN Women and spoke at the Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development regarding gender equality.
- **Quote (Girl):** *"We, the children and youth, carry a unique ability to prove that we are not just children, but powerful voices capable of creating change..."* — Venise, 16, **Philippines**.



6. Civil registration and legal documentation

Children advocate for basic rights such as birth registration, which are essential for accessing other services.

Type: Technical workshop participation and ministerial advocacy.

Spaces & Levels: Ministerial Conference on Civil Registration and Vital Statistics (Bangkok).

Examples:

A child representative from **Sri Lanka** highlighted birth certificate issues in developing countries at a regional ministerial conference.

Section 4: How are children participating in decision-making?

Children participate in decision-making by moving beyond being passive beneficiaries to becoming active partners and agents of change. Their involvement ranges across three primary levels: **consultative**, where they are asked for their opinions; **collaborative**, where they work alongside adults; and **child-led**, where they initiate and lead their own activities.

Areas of Influence

Children influence several critical areas of World Vision (WV) and community operations:

- **Programming life cycle:** They are involved in identifying community needs, planning and designing new projects, implementing activities, and participating in monitoring and evaluation.
- **Government planning and budgeting:** In countries like Nepal, Bangladesh, and Indonesia, children participate in formal government processes to advocate for child-friendly budgets and services.
- **Policy and law formulation:** Children provide direct input for national policies, such as the Loss and Damage Policy in the Solomon Islands or local regulations regarding school dropouts and child protection in Indonesia.
- **Organizational strategy:** Children in India, the Philippines, and Nepal contributed directly to the development of new Country Strategies, presenting their priorities to National Directors and Boards.

Common child participation approaches

The most frequent methods and platforms for child participation include:

- **Clubs and forums:** Children's clubs, Impact+ clubs, and child forums serve as the primary grassroots platforms for skill-building and collective action.
- **Advisory councils:** Formal groups like Child Advisory Councils (CAC) meet regularly with Senior Leadership Teams to provide strategic feedback.
- **Child-led research (CLR):** Children conduct their own research on issues like nutrition, school meals, and school dropouts, using the findings to advocate for change with local authorities.
- **Citizen Voice and Action (CVA):** Children use scorecard sessions to monitor the quality of government services in health, education, and WASH.
- **Structured consultations:** Events such as Annual Community Reflection and Planning (ACRP) meetings ensure children's views are captured in annual progress reports.
- **Creative and digital media:** Children use art, posters, drama, and digital tools like podcasts and social media to express their opinions and reach wider audiences.

What is working and why

What is working:

- **Increased confidence:** Children report significantly higher levels of self-esteem, public speaking skills, and leadership ability.
- **Shifting adult attitudes:** Adults, including parents and government officials, have begun to recognize and value children's abilities as credible contributors to development.
- **Real policy impact:** Advocacy has led to concrete results, such as declaring villages child-marriage free and securing government funding for child-friendly playgrounds and health services.

Why is it working:

- **Intentional capacity building:** Systematic training in child rights, advocacy, and life skills empowers children with the tools they need to engage effectively.
- **Safe and respectful spaces:** Providing dedicated, non-judgmental environments allows children to speak freely without fear of pressure or discrimination.
- **Meaningful feedback loops:** When staff and decision-makers inform children how their inputs were used, it builds trust and reinforces the value of their participation.
- **Fun and inclusive approaches:** Using age-appropriate methods like games, group work, and creative arts makes participation engaging and accessible for all children, including those with disabilities.

Summary of children's participation in groups and clubs from the report data¹

Country	Participation Scale (Reach/Membership)	Key Methods & Platforms
India	65,059 children in 2,160 groups. 7,875 consulted for country strategy.	Children's Groups, ENOUGH Campaign, Self-defense sessions.
Sri Lanka	40,000+ children in 600+ clubs. ACRP conducted in 26/27 Area Programs.	Impact Plus, Child-Led Advocacy, virtual Senior Leadership meetings.
Nepal	24,350 children in clubs. 306,143 total children engaged.	Child Congress, Reading Camps, Nutrition Dialogues.
Bangladesh	1,127 Child Forums and 544 Youth Forums. 4,500 Youth Led DRR members.	"5 Zero" Advocacy, Citizen Voice and Action (CVA), IMPACT+ groups.
Indonesia	235 village child groups. 1,614 children surveyed for ENOUGH.	Musrenbang (Village Planning), Child-Led Research (CLR), Child Advisory Council.
Timor-Leste	4,087 adolescents in IMPACT+ Clubs. 21,000 children impacted total.	IMPACT Clubs, Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) mapping, G-SIG partnership.

¹Not all countries reported data on numbers of children participating in groups or clubs.

Section 5: What could be done to make children's participation more effective?

Children consistently state that for their participation to be more effective, they need to move beyond being consulted to becoming active co-creators of programmes. Based on the reports, their needs are categorized into the following key themes:

1. Shift from consultation to child-led leadership

Children across the region express a strong desire to lead their own initiatives rather than just attending adult-led meetings.

- **Co-creation and implementation:** Children in Sri Lanka requested increased support to design and implement their own projects. Similarly, children in the Philippines urged World Vision to "*strengthen child-led activities*" by allowing them to lead clubs and trainings with "*minimal adult supervision*".
- **Formal decision-making roles:** In Vanuatu, children suggested formalizing child and youth committees across Area Programs to provide platforms for children to take on leadership roles. Children in the Philippines specifically asked to be involved in local councils and governing bodies.
- **Active Involvement in the Project Cycle:** Children in **India** called for more inclusion in Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) and project implementation planning.

2. Targeted capacity building and life skills

While children appreciate existing training, they identify specific gaps that would help them advocate more effectively.

- **Advanced advocacy skills:** 78% of children in Sri Lanka emphasized the need for stronger leadership skills, specifically in decision-making, problem-solving, and communication.
- **Digital literacy and online safety:** Children in Papua New Guinea (PNG) demanded "Advanced digital literacy and Online Protection" to safely navigate and advocate in digital spaces. In Bangladesh, children requested "*secure, child-friendly digital tools*" for continuous participation, especially for those in remote areas.
- **Fun and innovative methods:** Children in Indonesia recommended more creative and knowledge-boosting activities, such as "*outbound activities for teenagers*," to keep engagement high.

3. Inclusion of marginalized and remote children

A recurring theme is the need to ensure no child is left behind due to disability or geography.

- **Specialized tools for disabilities:** In Timor-Leste, children noted that those with disabilities face language barriers and need accessible formats like visual aids and simplified language. Bangladesh children called for "specialized and safe participation spaces" specifically for children with disabilities and those from minority groups.
- **Reaching underserved areas:** Children in Vanuatu noted that geographic isolation often cuts them off from opportunities, requesting more consistent engagement in rural or outer islands.

4. Transparent feedback loops and accountability

Children want to see the tangible impact of their voices to maintain trust in the process.

- **Knowing the outcome:** In the Solomon Islands, children highlighted that they feel valued when they receive "*clear, child-friendly feedback*" explaining which of their recommendations were taken forward.
- **Simplified tracking systems:** Children in India suggested developing "*simplified feedback-tracking systems*" so they can see exactly how their suggestions are acted upon.

5. Safe spaces and adult sensitization

Children often feel hindered by adult-centric attitudes or lack of safe environments.

- **Training for adults:** Children in India and Vanuatu recommended training parents, community leaders, and staff in "*child rights and facilitation skills*" to shift traditional hierarchies that prioritize adult voices.
- **Dedicated physical spaces:** There is a high demand for "*safe expression zones*" or "*child-friendly spaces*" where children can learn, play, and express creativity outside of formal school settings.

6. Mental health and psychosocial support

As participation often involves discussing difficult community issues, children identify a need for emotional support.

- **Counselling services:** 68% of children in Sri Lanka recommended more attention to psychosocial support and "peer-support mechanisms" to manage stress and social pressure.
- **Healing spaces:** In the Philippines, children specifically asked for "trauma-informed counselling" and safe, inclusive reporting mechanisms for abuse.



Section 6: Impact of child participation on children, communities and World Vision

Child participation is driving transformative changes for children, their communities, and World Vision as an organization by providing spaces for children to shape decision-making and speak out and act on issues that concern them

Impact on children

For individual children, participation fosters significant personal growth and empowers them to advocate for their own rights. Child participation strengthens children's confidence, leadership, and resilience. Children build public speaking skills, heal from trauma through creative expression, understand and claim their rights, and gain the courage to challenge harmful practices such as abuse, child marriage, and exploitation.

Impact on local communities

Child participation serves as a catalyst for broader social and physical transformation within communities. It drives social and structural change within communities. It shifts adult attitudes, improves infrastructure and basic services, influences local policies and budgets, and contributes to safer environments—including communities declared free from child marriage and child labour.

Impact on World Vision

Child participation is redefining how World Vision operates, ensuring its work is both relevant and accountable.

- **Strategic and Board-level influence:** Children are now directly shaping organizational direction by contributing to Country Strategy refreshes and meeting with National Boards and Senior Leadership Teams to share priorities.
- **Programme relevance and quality:** By listening to children, World Vision is able to design interventions that address actual needs, such as adapting life skills modules or prioritizing digital safety and mental health.
- **Organizational culture and vitality:** National Directors have noted that engaging with children brings "much freshness" and personal encouragement to the staff and leadership, reinforcing the organization's child-focused identity.
- **Accountability to beneficiaries:** Participation mechanisms, such as child-friendly feedback loops and assessments, ensure World Vision remains accountable to the children it serves.

Conclusions

The scale and results of participation across the South Asia Pacific region demonstrate what is possible when children are invested in as leaders and advocates. The reports show that child participation delivers its greatest impact when children are supported to move from consultation to leadership. While evidence of positive change is strong, children are clear about what still limits their influence—particularly adult centrism, weak follow through, and uneven access to safe, inclusive spaces. For practitioners, this is a call to deepen good practice: to share power more intentionally, invest in children’s skills and wellbeing, and strengthen systems that make participation consistent, inclusive, and genuinely child led. Doing so will ensure participation remains not only meaningful, but transformative for children, communities, and World Vision’s mission.

Appendix: Consolidated child participation and impact data

The following table consolidates data from the FY 2025 field office reports regarding child participation platforms, the scale of membership or reach, and the tangible impacts resulting from their engagement.

Country	Participation Spaces (Clubs, Groups, Forums)	Membership / Reach Numbers	Key Impacts and Outcomes
India	2,160 Children’s Groups; ENOUGH Campaign; Remedial Education Classes (RECs),	65,059 in groups; 135,652 in ENOUGH campaign; 7,875 consulted for Country Strategy.	84% of children felt empowered to take action for themselves; 100% of Area Programs (APs) reached a maturing rating in child participation.
Sri Lanka	600+ Children’s Clubs; Impact Plus Clubs; Children’s Societies.	40,000+ total members.	Recognized as transformative platforms in 100% of APs; children in Rideegama established plastic collection points to protect the environment.
Nepal	Child Clubs & Networks; Child Congress (Ward to District); Reading Camps.	24,350 in clubs; 8,925 in 357 reading camps; 1,563 in Child Congress.	11 wards across 9 local governments declared "Child-Friendly" due to child-led advocacy for resource allocation.
Bangladesh	1,127 Child Forums; 544 Youth Forums; 915 IMPACT+ groups; Youth Led DRR platform.	4,500 Youth Led DRR members; 13,409 children with disabilities reached.	2,287 villages declared Child Marriage Free; IMPACT+ groups successfully advocated for the construction of permanent community bridges.

Country	Participation Spaces (Clubs, Groups, Forums)	Membership / Reach Numbers	Key Impacts and Outcomes
Indonesia	235 Village Child Groups; Child Advisory Council (CAC); Child-Led Research (CLR) groups.	1,614 respondents for school meal research; 18 children in the CAC.	Child-led research on school dropouts led to the issuance of Bengkayang Regency Regulation No. 22 of 2025.
Timor-Leste	62 IMPACT Clubs; IMPACT+ Clubs; G-SIG youth partnership.	1,201 in IMPACT Clubs; 2,886 in IMPACT+ Clubs across major projects.	150 youth trained in geospatial technology for disaster mapping; 63% of youth reported positive shifts in gender norms.
Vanuatu	REACH Centre; Strong Family Program; planned Child and Youth Committees.	8,093 total child reach (3,832 boys, 4,261 girls).	MHPSS interventions after the 2024 earthquake helped children build resilience and process trauma through creative arts.
Philippines	Annual Children and Youth (CAY) Dialogue; Child-led initiatives; Board consultations.	661 children assessed via participation measurement tools.	55% of participation was collaborative; feedback led to safer school environments and improved child protection systems.
Solomon Islands	Child Advocacy Committees; National Loss and Damage Forum.	50 children participated across high-level dialogues and forums.	Child contributions directly shaped the nation's first-ever Loss and Damage Policy.
Papua New Guinea	School WASH Clubs; CHAMP platform; Project peer groups (e.g., Crab Farming).	10 students in a pilot WASH club; 6 student interns for CHAMP.	Nutrition support (PD Hearth) helped Joshua (cerebral meningitis) increase weight from 6.9kg to 8.9kg; crab farming reduced youth involvement in risky behaviours.



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