

Empowering Communities to advocate for the most vulnerable



Through local-level advocacy, World Vision seeks to mobilise and empower individuals and communities to address the causes of vulnerability for those most affected and empower them to influence local governments and other authorities to address the obstacles that trap certain children in the perpetual cycle of poverty.

WHAT IS VULNERABILITY?



The Romani (Roma) people, is one of the largest minority groups in Europe. Roma children are highly vulnerable to trafficking. An estimated **9 million Roma have their rights systematically denied.** (ILO, 2013)



Globally, more than 100 million children are estimated to be on the street. **Approximately 10 million children are working as prostitutes, 90% of them girls.** (ILO, 2013)



Globally, **168 million children between 5 and 17 are engaged in child labour, including 54,000 in Albania and more than 12 million in Pakistan.** (ILO, 2013)



In Pakistan **1.2 million children are trafficked each year.** (ILO, 2013)



In Albania **120 children are trafficked daily for begging,** most are from the Roma minority. (CRCA, 2012)



Children from the Roma minority in Bosnia and Herzegovina participate in a theatre performance about the dismal school enrolment rates among their peers in order to raise awareness and change the situation. Photo by World Vision staff.

ADVOCATING FOR ACCESS TO EDUCATION

National data show that only 69 per cent of Roma children in Bosnia and Herzegovina attend primary school. That already low percentage drops to 22 per cent for secondary school.

Together with partner organizations, World Vision is empowering the Roma community to advocate for necessary change as part of its Back to School campaign.

In one recent activity, children from the Roma minority prepared a play about the importance of education. The play features two families trying to provide their children a better future; one child is in school, the other is not. By the end of the programme, both children are enrolled in school and all spectators are aware of the importance of education.

The play was performed in front of a packed audience from Roma national minority.

As a result of this and other activities in the campaign 35 children were enrolled in education for the first time and six students who had dropped out return to class.

OUR APPROACH

We seek to mobilise and empower individuals and communities to address the root causes of vulnerability and influence government authorities on all levels to address these issues through:

-Research and documentation: generate evidence of the absence of services in a community, demonstrate the impact of the problem as well as our interventions, which strengthens our influence and policy recommendations.

-Building partnerships and Networks: enhance and amplify our voice by joining with other concerned individuals and groups. Working together also contributes to sustainability.

-Cross-border networking: used primarily to combat trafficking, this involves collaboration and coordination with security, immigration offices and Civil society organizations.

-Campaigning: increases the profile issues by making them known. It also helps increase the momentum for actions by policy makers.

-Capacity building: equipping community members, staff and other stakeholders with knowledge and skills that enables them to engage in the demanding of services from the government.

-Reintegration and aiding access to social services: Support provided to victims of trafficking and abuse such as counseling, health, education, and general welfare to aide the recovery process.

-Citizen Voice and Action: an approach that seeks to contribute to strengthening social accountability at the local level of governance by influencing policy monitoring and implementation through empowering communities and facilitating dialogue between communities and the governments that represent them.

-Public awareness and educational activities: provide information regarding: rights, responsibilities to communities, enabling them to monitor government services and voice their concerns.

-Information, Communication and technology (ICT): used to virtually mobilize and facilitate engagement with government leaders to contribute to shaping policy and influencing service delivery.

-Participatory Budgeting and Monitoring: enabling communities to decide how and where their resources will be allocated, ensuring that community priorities are met.

-Child Protection and Advocacy: empowering communities to address all Violence Against Children in all their spheres.

EMPOWERING COMMUNITIES TO ADVOCATE FOR THEIR RIGHTS IN ALBANIA

Bulqiza, a town located four hours east of Albania's capital city, Tirana is known for its deposits of Chromium, the key ingredient of stainless steel. Needless to say, mining is the main industry here.

Every day, children sift through mountains of loose blast rubble left by mining companies and considered debris. Children can find 80-100 kg of chrome in a day. They sell it to local black market dealers who then sell it back to the mining companies.

Keli, 13, is one of the children who spends his days on the side of the mountain. His mother was killed by a heavy vehicle that was moving ore from the local mines. His father left the family and lives elsewhere.

On a good day, Keli can make \$8 (USD). He wants to finish school and would like to be a football player.

Although World Vision is not working specifically in this area, the problem of child labour, unsafe working conditions and mining is an advocacy theme that is focused on at the national level.

Through World Vision's Citizen Voice and Action programmes, communities learn about their rights and are equipped to advocate on their own behalf or on behalf of the most vulnerable.



Keli, 13, sifts through the rubble in one of the blast zones outside of Bulqiza. Along with many other children, he is looking for Chrome. His mother was killed in a mining accident a number of years ago. It is up to him to provide for his family's needs. Photo by Paul Bettings, World Vision.

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