

# Keeping children safe from harm



Across all of World Vision's development, relief and advocacy work in the Middle East, Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia our top priority is to ensure all children, especially the most vulnerable, are protected from harm.

We listen to children to understand their experiences and work with families, communities and child-safe entities to keep children safe.

Together with our partners, we influence national and regional policies and practices that make the environment safer for children. As child advocates,

## WHAT IS HAPPENING



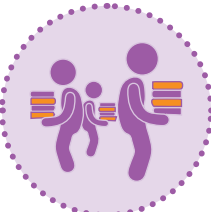
70 per cent of children are experiencing violent discipline or verbal abuse.



More than **6.5 million** children are living with disabilities.



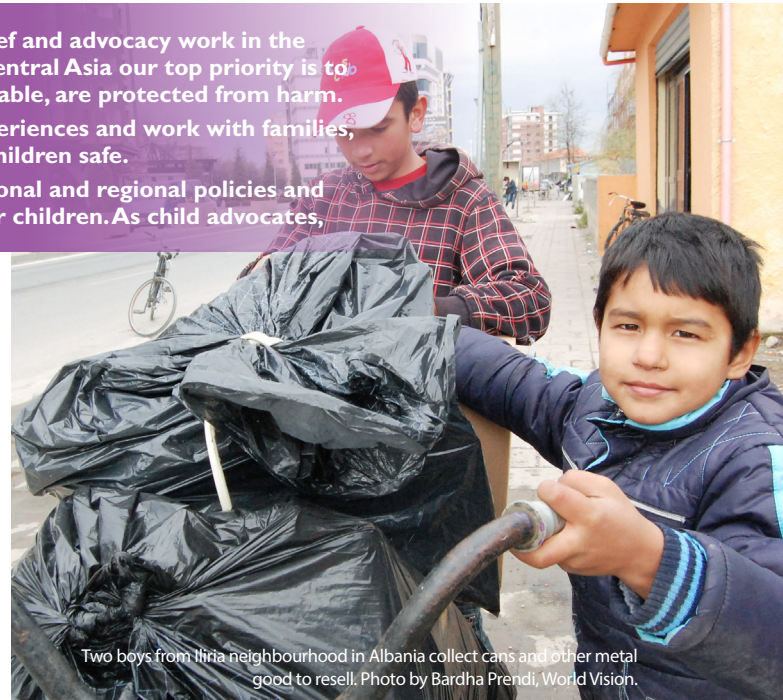
More than **3 million** girls will be married as child brides this year.



More than **13.4 million** children are involved in child labour.



More than **2 million** girls are at risk of being lost before they are born as a result of sex-selective abortions.



Two boys from Iliria neighbourhood in Albania collect cans and other metal goods to resell. Photo by Bardha Prendi, World Vision.

## WHAT WE DO

- **Prevent exploitation**, harmful traditional practices and violence against children in their families and communities.
- **Protect children** living in vulnerable situations in communities.
- **Restore children** who have been abused, neglected or exploited.

## OUR APPROACH

World Vision defines child protection as a system of coordinated formal elements (e.g. laws, accountability mechanisms) and informal elements (e.g. community education, children's life skills) that work together to prevent and to respond to actions of abuse, neglect, exploitation and violence against children.

In collaboration with communities, civil society and government partners, World Vision helps to strengthen one or more of the elements of the system, according to the needs of the situation.

This systematic approach to tackling child protection issues in a broad and sustainable manner makes children stronger, and their environment safer.

## ALBANIA: HELPING CHILDREN WITH

Fatjona, 15, is only one of nearly 18,000 children with different abilities living in Albania. For a number of reasons, most of them live in poor conditions. Many rarely leave home because of mobility limitations or because their families are ashamed of them. A 2010, study by the Ministry of Education and Science showed that less than 15 per cent of disabled children are in school.

Fatjona is a fighter. She proved to everyone that she is equal and that while she might depend on a wheelchair for her mobility, her voice needs no support. "When I sing, I forget everything," she said, after a recent performance. "The music makes me feel equal to everyone in this room."

Fatjona is lucky. She has a lot of friends that help her in her daily routine. They push her wheelchair and try to make her comfortable in every moment.

At the end of her recital, her friends had a special surprise for her; they all gathered together and helped Fatjona to stand on her feet. Her eyes were filled with tears and she said that she is not given up, not even for a moment, and that one day she is going to stand on her feet by herself.



## ARMENIA: WHERE IT IS BETTER TO BE BORN A BOY

*It is estimated, that by 2030 Armenia will have approximately 90,000 missing women—women who should have been, but were not, born because of sex-selective abortions.*

The reasons for prenatal sex selection lie within the traditions of Armenian society that gives strong preference to sons who many still believe: continue family lineage, inherit property and take care of parents in their old age.

Anahit, 22, lives in a village near the town of Talin, in northwest Armenia. She is a mother of a 3-year-old girl, and already had two sex-based abortions. Her husband and family approved of her actions. "I don't want any more girls," she says. "Sons continue the family line. If I get pregnant with a girl, I will have an abortion again."

World Vision is working with the government and other NGOs to help stop this practice through community education, support for healthcare providers and national-level advocacy efforts.



More than 1,400 girls are not being born every year in Armenia; their mothers choose to terminate their pregnancies rather than have a female child. Photo by Nune Hayrapetyan, World Vision.

**World Vision Middle East, Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia Regional Office**

62 Perikleous Street, 2021, Strovolos, Nicosia Cyprus

e-mail: [contact\\_MEERO@wvi.org](mailto:contact_MEERO@wvi.org)

Office: +357-22-870277 Fax: +357-22-870204



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