



It takes partnerships:
**CASE STUDY
SUMMARY**

ESWATINI | LESOTHO | ARMENIA

CASE STUDY SUMMARY

This work would not have been possible without The Partnering Initiative and the excellent collaboration from colleagues in the three participating World Vision offices, led by campaign leads Gayane Martirosyan (World Vision Armenia), Maseisa Ntlama (World Vision Lesotho), and Sakhile Dlamini (World Vision Eswatini).

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World Vision is a Christian relief, development and advocacy organisation dedicated to working with children, families and communities to overcome poverty and injustice.

www.wvi.org/ittakesaworld

Violence affects half of the world's children and costs the global community up to US\$7 trillion a year – roughly 8% of global GDP.¹

There is now worldwide consensus that violence can be eliminated by implementing evidence-based cross-sectoral strategies, such as the INSPIRE framework,² and by mobilising and coordinating the efforts of different stakeholders and sectors of society. In March 2017, World Vision launched the global campaign *It takes a world to end violence against children* to raise awareness, improve accountability for commitments and inspire urgent action related to ending violence against children. Given the multi-sectoral nature of the issue, partnerships are a key driver for the campaign – working with groups like civil society, faith groups, children and adolescents, government, the private sector and the United Nations (UN), maximise impact and can ensure the overall sustainability of the campaign.

To learn more about the role that partnerships played in national *It takes a world* campaigns, World Vision conducted semi-structured interviews with focal points from World Vision Armenia, Eswatini and Lesotho and in-country campaign partners from July to August 2018. The offices were selected for their varying, innovative approaches to embedding partnering within their respective campaigns. The interviews focused on how the foundations for partnering were laid and how these approaches are contributing towards the campaign goals.

Based on the findings, World Vision identified **FIVE** recommendations based on emerging good practice, **THREE** areas for strengthening and **ONE** new approach to explore for collaborative, multi-stakeholder national-level campaigns.

World Vision's CAMPAIGN STRATEGIC DRIVERS

DRIVEN BY
THE FIELD

LOOKING
OUTWARDS
—
NEW
PARTNERSHIPS
& COALITIONS

FAITH IN
ACTION

CHILDREN
& YOUTH
AS AGENTS
OF CHANGE

MOST
VULNERABLE
IN THE
HARDEST
PLACES

WHOLE OF
WORLD VISION

FIVE RECOMMENDATIONS FROM EMERGING GOOD PRACTICE

1 Develop a campaign partnering approach based on an understanding of the context for collaboration.

The context for collaboration, or 'collaborative eco-system', refers to the readiness and capacity of key actors to collaborate together on a specific issue. Explore the following key questions to help assess the dimensions of the particular collaborative eco-system and identify the appropriate partnering approaches to take:

- A How high a priority is the issue of interest for the government and other key stakeholders?** Based on findings from each case study, the respective campaigns significantly benefitted from working on issues of high national priority each of which have been supportive of partnering approaches (see text in sidebar, lower right).
- B Is an effective mechanism to enable broad, multi-stakeholder collaboration at the national level already in place?** Although it can take different forms (e.g. a coalition), it is critical that such a mechanism is in place to truly galvanise multiple actors around a common campaign issue. In Armenia, there was no such mechanism. Therefore, building the national coalition was at the core of the partnering approach in that country.
- C Are key organisations capable of partnering effectively?** A strong track-record of partnering between key actors will enable new partnerships to be catalysed relatively quickly. In contrast where there is low trust and/or lack of a common understanding of how to partner well, it will be a slower process and may require inputs into the system to release the 'collaborative potential' (see **RECOMMENDATION 5** on page 4).

2 Think beyond the 'usual suspects' to achieve far-reaching, sustainable change.

The case studies demonstrate a commitment to seeking a diverse set of partners when tackling complex, systemic issues. For example, all three countries included partners from **different sectors**, like civil society, faith-based organisations, government and UN entities (see sidebar to right). Similarly, when change is required from the community to the national level, it is important to engage partners across **geographic levels and technical competencies** who are able to reach and be effective at these different levels. The case studies provide examples which range from working with church organisations to reaching communities with awareness-raising messages via radio and television, through to linking campaign partners into national-level strategy development processes to end violence against children.



The context for collaboration: how high a priority is the issue?

In **Lesotho**, World Vision was able to merge its campaign into the process of designing the government-led national campaign to end child marriage; in **Eswatini**, the government's national strategy to end violence was already in place; **Armenia** became a *pathfinding country* of the Global Partnership to End Violence against children.

→ **Pathfinding countries** are those that commit to accelerate achievement of the goals of the Global Partnership to End Violence Against Children.

[read more](#)

¹ Perezniето, Paola and Andres Montes, Solveig Routier and Lara Langston. 'The costs and economic impact of violence against children.' https://www.childfund.org/uploadedFiles/public_site/media/ODI%20Report%20%20The%20cost%20and%20economic%20impact%20of%20violence%20against%20children.pdf

² https://www.who.int/violence_injury_prevention/violence/inspire/en/



3 Balance the need for early momentum with making longer-term, foundational investments.

Each case study country faced quite different challenges regarding balancing the need to create and maintain momentum in the early stages with the need to make longer-term, strategic investments. In Eswatini and Lesotho, early momentum was driven through a focus on a small number of bilateral partnerships whilst the challenge was ensuring the wider set of partners remained engaged. In Armenia, considerable investments in building the multi-stakeholder coalition had to be balanced with early wins to maintain the enthusiasm of partners through the relatively complicated process of building the coalition.

Responding appropriately to the collaborative ecosystem (see **RECOMMENDATION 1** on page 3) is critical. Beyond this, the campaigns (in particular) are aware of the balance to be struck between the speed and efficiency resulting from working with a few selected partners and the buy-in resulting from including all partners at the outset. Having a ‘small coalition of willing partners’ propelling the campaign at the outset requires fewer resources, is easier to manage, and results in faster decision-making and implementation. However, as also experienced, it also runs the risk of having other organisations not buying into what the founding partners have already established and therefore also risks longer-term impacts.

4 Consciously manage power imbalances: the case of brands and logos.

In partnerships, ‘The well-intentioned actor with power will consciously manage how it projects its power in order to respect the necessity for “equity” – a key principle in establishing genuine partnership’.³ In its global campaign design we have recognised the link between power and brands and logos by creating a campaign logo which can be used with or without the World Vision brand. This is intended to remove a potential stumbling block for other organisations to join the **It takes a world** campaign as full partners. With similar sensitivity, in the three case studies, different treatments of the campaign logo can be observed. For example, in Armenia, it quickly became apparent that to create a national coalition which was genuinely owned by all the members, World Vision would need to go one step further and let go of the **It takes a world** logo enabling the partners to develop their own logo for the **Share Love Not Violence** campaign (see sidebar to left).

5 Invest in strengthening the capability of partners to collaborate effectively.

Partnership action cannot go beyond the partnering capabilities of the member organisations. More often than not, organisations have different understandings of how to partner effectively which could lead to misalignment of expectations and poor partnership outcomes. Holding joint partnering training **with potential partners** can address these issues and build key partnering competencies including how to apply core partnering principles and effectively manage common challenges through the partnership management cycle. In both the Lesotho and Eswatini case studies, a partnering training with potential partners was held at the start of the campaign process. This training was reported by interviewees as a key intervention that enabled partnerships to develop more quickly and effectively.

THREE AREAS TO STRENGTHEN

1 Building shared measurement systems to align and maximise partner contributions towards the joint goal

It is important to develop common monitoring and review mechanisms and indicators of success for the collaborative work from the outset.⁴ Partnership metrics need to monitor along three fronts: progress towards the joint project goal; the partners (e.g. their perception of net benefit in relation to their involvement in the partnership); and the partnership itself (e.g. how it is being facilitated). The latter two dimensions are critical because if these do not remain 'healthy' the partners will not remain in the partnership and therefore the intended outcomes will not be achieved. Whilst it is understood that setting up frameworks and indicators takes time, interviewees reported deficits of varying degrees with respect to developing a shared measurement system across the three case studies.

2 Designing a resourcing strategy to maintain partner momentum

Funding shortfalls (present in all three case studies) need to be addressed in good time or they are likely to become a limiting factor once initial impetus has waned. Whilst there may be limited opportunities for individual partner organisations to assign more funding to the joint campaign, this is an area where the campaigns as a whole need to develop funding strategies. Given that institutional donors are increasingly seeking consortia and partnering approaches for grant applications, multi-stakeholder campaigns should consider applying for joint multi-year donor funding as a collaboration.

In the meantime, it is important to continue to develop a compelling narrative or value proposition and generate evidence to demonstrate successes.

3 Partnering with the private sector

While these three country campaigns have generally engaged a wide range of diverse partners (see **RECOMMENDATION 2** on page 3), the private sector is largely absent. World Vision's global campaign strategy emphasises the need to engage with business and has produced a report which makes the case for business action.⁵ This is clearly an area for strengthening, with a critical step being the identification of issues which are a key priority for specific industry sectors and business (see **RECOMMENDATION 1A** on page 3).

³ <https://www.wvi.org/united-nations-and-global-engagement/publication/advancing-debate-cross-sector-partnerships-business>

⁴ Collective Impact, John Kania & Mark Kramer Winter 2011, Stanford Social Innovation Review, https://ssir.org/articles/entry/collective_impact#

⁵ <https://www.wvi.org/it-takes-world/publication/case-business-action-end-violence-against-children>



Eswatini



Lesotho



Armenia



NEW APPROACH TO EXPLORE

Consider the key mechanisms that will generate a collaborative advantage

Paying sufficient attention to the mechanisms needed to generate collaborative advantage is critical when designing and implementing partnerships, since that is the difference (or added value) between a partnership approach compared to the sum of single actor approaches. In response to this, we contributed to a recently published framework to support maximising value creation through partnerships,⁶ which identifies eleven mechanisms through which partnerships have the potential to create collaborative advantage.

It can be tentatively concluded that whilst there is evidence that a number of these mechanisms are being accessed by the campaigns (e.g. mechanisms 1, 5, 6, and 10), for others (e.g. 'innovation'), it appears that there may be collaborative opportunities which are being underutilised. More rigorous analysis is needed to confirm this.

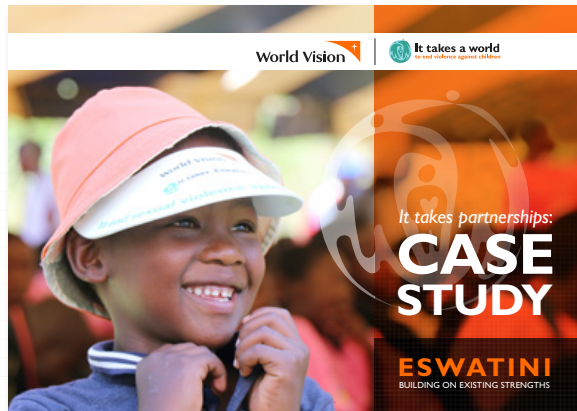
Based on this preliminary review, it is recommended that partnerships and collaborative initiatives employ this framework during their design and review phases to ensure that the most appropriate collaborative advantage mechanisms are being invested in.

⁶ The Partnering Initiative, with input from World Vision, has recently launched a guide entitled, Maximising the impact of partnerships for the SDGs: A practical guide to partnership value creation: <https://www.thepartneringinitiative.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/Maximising-partnership-value-for-the-SDGs.pdf>.

COLLABORATIVE ADVANTAGE FRAMEWORK



CLICK BELOW TO VIEW EACH COUNTRY CASE STUDY.



ESWATINI CASE STUDY

[VIEW](#)



LESOTHO CASE STUDY

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ARMENIA CASE STUDY

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For more information regarding *It takes a world*:

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