



CHILD SPONSORSHIP RESEARCH

Faith-based Development

World Vision's Christian identity and the way it informs programming

About the research

World Vision evaluated eight development programmes around the world as part of Phase 2 of its Child Sponsorship Research programme. The evaluated programmes were: Colomi (Bolivia), Arani (Bolivia), Nabiswera (Uganda), Kaswa (Uganda), Weeraketiya (Sri Lanka), Pottuvil (Sri Lanka), Samaki Meanchey (Cambodia), Vardenis (Armenia).

Community perceptions

Several programmes had to overcome initial community apprehension about World Vision's Christian identity – fearing non-Christians would be excluded. World Vision successfully demonstrated these fears were groundless. Communities agreed World Vision is inclusive, works without bias and is respectful of all people. Findings show:

- ✓ World Vision's Christian identity helped build trust in communities
- ✓ Programmes successfully overcame fears of proselytisation
- ✓ Buddhists and Muslims felt included in programmes – inter-faith partnerships helped

Christian witness

Many staff reported their work with World Vision provided an opportunity to live out their faith and bear witness. Staff members mostly live in or nearby the programme area. This 'ministry of presence' is often deeply valued by community members.

“World Vision is a Christian [organisation], but all activities and programmes are supporting social development in the village, which align with the mission of the Pagoda. So we often work together ...” – *Buddhist monk, Samaki Meanchey, Cambodia*

Faith-based partnerships

Formal and informal partnerships with churches and other faith-based organisations were evident in all evaluated programmes. Successful examples include:

- ✓ **Sri Lanka:** Working with Muslim and Hindu organisations to diffuse religious tensions
- ✓ **Uganda:** Partnering with churches and mosques on HIV prevention
- ✓ **Armenia:** Supporting Orthodox Church programmes to advance social justice
- ✓ **Cambodia:** Partnering with Buddhist temples to carry out community development
- ✓ **Bolivia:** Supporting pastoral counselling of families affected by alcohol abuse

“In my case, I used to drink a bit and I was into drugs. At a retreat I met God's love and left my past behind. Now I have a mission to help people.” – *Adolescent, Colomi, Bolivia*



Spiritual nurture

World Vision's Christian faith means programmes focus on spiritual nurture and life skills in addition to survival and basic needs. Findings show positive associations between adolescent participation in World Vision activities and hope, resilience or social competency scores.

[Click here](#) to read the full report.
[Click here](#) to access all Phase 2 findings.