

Promoting equality for women & girls



Across all of World Vision's development, relief and advocacy work in the Middle East, Eastern Europe and Southern Asia our top priority is to ensure all children, receive equal opportunities to survive and succeed in life.

Through our work on gender equality, we build and promote local interactions, innovation and change at the country and field levels. These learnings provide evidence-based practices and afford the organisation the opportunity to create a greater impact on gender equality across the region.

WHAT IS HAPPENING



1 in 3 women globally will be beaten, raped, or otherwise abused during her lifetime. In most cases, the abuser will be a member of her own family. (WHO, 2005)



52% of women surveyed within World Vision's programmes in Jerusalem West Bank and Gaza **believe that women should tolerate violence in order to keep their families together.** (World Vision JWG 2014: Gender Based Violence Status in JWG West Ramallah ADP)



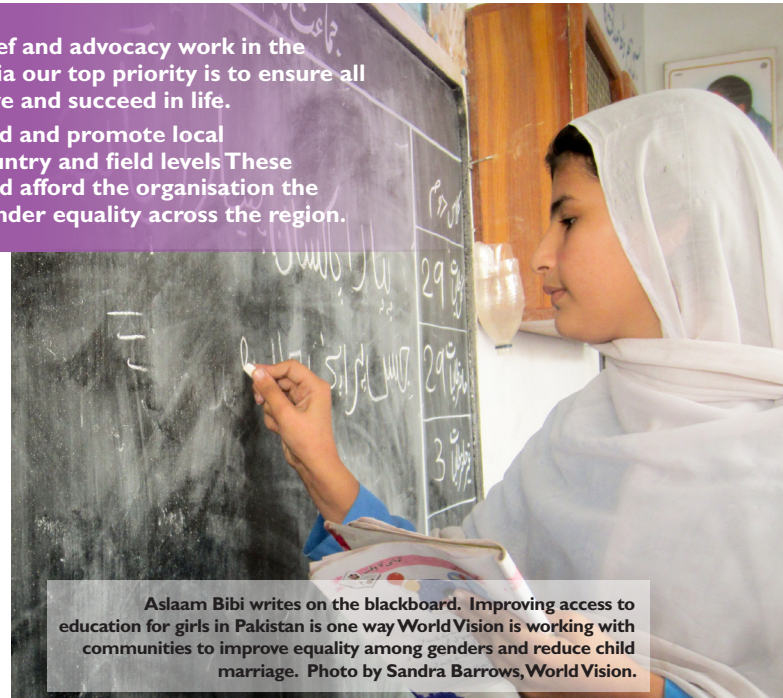
In Pakistan **32 per cent of married women are 16 and under.** (The State of the World's Children, 2009, page 150)



1 in 8 women in Afghanistan will die in childbirth due to pregnancy and labour-related causes. (The State of the World's Children, 2009, page 6)



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



Aslaam Bibi writes on the blackboard. Improving access to education for girls in Pakistan is one way World Vision is working with communities to improve equality among genders and reduce child marriage. Photo by Sandra Barrows, World Vision.

WHAT WE DO

- Provide communities with appropriate, accurate and necessary information.
- Equip individuals and leaders to advocate for equality.
- Prevent future issues by addressing these topics today.

OUR APPROACH

World Vision's Gender Learning Hub provides field offices in Jerusalem, West Bank and Gaza, Lebanon, Armenia, Georgia and Bosnia and Herzegovina tools to promote equal participation of women, men and children by allowing communities to hold authorities accountable through advocacy efforts.

Two main areas of foci for the Gender Learning Hub include:

- the prevention and elimination of gender-based violence and,
- the reduction and eventual elimination of prenatal sex selection.

These programmes target youth and adults, with the goal of providing leaders important information in order to challenge

ALBANIA: HELPING TEENAGE GIRLS GET

"For most of my young life I was planning on and living [to reach my] dream to become a doctor," says Merushe Tojali, 16, of from Vlora ADP. But, like many girls across Albania, Merushe's dream was crushed when it came face to face with the harsh reality.

As if poverty wasn't enough of a hurdle, Merushe also faced the added level of traditional barriers. "I ran into the cold cultural wall blocking females from higher education," she says, remembering a discussion she had with her mother.

Merushe is one of the girls who participated in the campaign and advocated for access to education. She was at in 8th grade at the time and did what she could to convince others of the importance of education in her area. She never knew that the next year she would find herself on the same path as the girls she was advocating for.

World Vision staff made many family visits during which they discovered that 49 children in the 13 communities where Vlora ADP operates, were at risk of having their educational growth cut-off early. Thanks to the campaign, 22 children, including Merushe, are now back in school.



For many girls in Albania, especially those from rural families with few financial resources, 9th grade is as far as they can go. After that, they are expected to wait to be wed and work towards being a good wife someday. Things, however, are changing. Merushe, 16, was part of an advocacy campaign to keep kids in school, especially girls. Photo by Klevisa Breshani, World Vision.

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 which 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.

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