



WILL YOU HEAR US?

It takes listening
to children to end violence
against them

INTRODUCTION

**“DO NOT
REMAIN SILENT.
REPORT AND
RAISE YOUR
VOICE AGAINST
ALL FORMS OF
ABUSE AND
HARASSMENT.”**

CHILD, NICARAGUA



• **MELISSA, 6,** and her family have been helped to recover from domestic abuse by volunteer Justice Promoter Lucia, trained and supported by World Vision in Nicaragua. Nigel Marsh/ World Vision

CHILDREN IN ALBANIA •

take awareness activities to the streets to publicly demonstrate that protection starts in the family. World Vision staff/ World Vision



WHEN CHILDREN SUFFER VIOLENCE THEY ARE NOT HAPPY. WHEN CHILDREN ARE VIOLATED THEY DON'T LIVE THEIR CHILDHOOD PROPERLY.” ANISA, 15, ALBANIA

Children’s thoughts matter. Their opinions are important. Their voices should be heard. This is especially true when it comes to ending the violence that is committed against them.

Children bring a unique vision of the world, a belief that real change is possible, and the enthusiasm to make it happen. They can act together to improve and shape their own lives and those of entire communities and societies. When given the chance, they can play a key role in the decisions that most affect their lives.

Our dream for children is a simple one: A childhood. The chance to play, to go to school, to be healthy, to make friends, to be loved and, above all else, to be safe from harm. We believe this is possible. To end violence against children, it takes listening to them. It takes involving them. It takes empowering them.

This report is the first of a number, based on conversations World Vision facilitated between more than 2,000 children across 28 countries. In these conversations, children talked about the effects violence has on their lives and the lives of their friends, what they believe causes this violence, how governments and other leaders can help put an end to it, and – perhaps most importantly – what they want to do to be involved in ending this global problem, for good.

Children and young people's participation in the issues that affect their lives helps them to become active and responsible citizens. It builds character, means they are involved in social and political decision-making. It improves their understanding of what it means to be an active citizen at the heart of social change, working towards the well-being of others, and it helps them to develop the skills and confidence to shape the world around them.

TO END VIOLENCE AGAINST CHILDREN, IT TAKES LISTENING TO THEM. IT TAKES INVOLVING THEM. IT TAKES EMPOWERING THEM.

World Vision's work involves creating partnerships between children and young people, communities and national governments, across generations. World Vision supports dialogue between children and adults to ensure that policies and practices best serve the well-being and rights of children and young people, especially when it comes to ending violence against them. We don't believe this can happen without their involvement.

Children and young people's active engagement has become an essential approach to promote policy change, implementation and monitoring. They are spokespeople who are listened to. They are ambassadors and agents of change. When heard together, their voices are powerful. Their involvement supports the building of democratic societies and helps to achieve better results for the well-being of everyone.

How World Vision will listen

The role of children and youth as agents of change is a strategic driver in World Vision's new global campaign to end violence against children. Their inclusion will be one of our signature approaches, more intentionally recognising children as competent social actors in creating change and key partners in the campaign. By engaging them as active participants in the change process, we can and will ensure that space and opportunities are provided to them.

World Vision will do this by encouraging and enabling offices to follow the campaign design, monitoring and evaluation guidance which has specific instructions for consulting with and using input from children. One-page quick reference sheets for countries who have already completed consultation with children will be available for integrating specific activities into campaign designs that highlight the active and safe involvement of children.

METHODOLOGY

The consultation was conducted over several months in 2016. It adopted a child-focused, participatory approach and used focus group discussions, as the main method, with more than 2,000 children and young people, aged up to 18.

The sample of participants is not representative but aimed to gather views and inputs from the children and young people from a range of countries where World Vision works. The findings presented in this report are therefore to be viewed as being based on the perceptions of the participants involved.

Focus group discussion sessions were organised by World Vision's Child Participation and Protection staff members who facilitated the conversation with participants in order to collectively analyse the challenges and opportunities they identify to end violence against children at the household, community and national levels.

The facilitation team ensured safe and ethical participation of children, strictly adhering to World Vision's child protection policies. Staff members were prepared to handle issues caused by children reliving their experiences. Participation was voluntary and informed, and each participant had the right to opt out.

The criteria that guided the selection of participants included gender, urban/rural, different abilities, religion, ethnicity and nationality. The consultation teams took into account possible cultural sensitivities, and some questions were adapted to the specific contexts where children live. Sessions were conducted in the local language of child participants and transcriptions were translated into English.

All personal information such as name and contact details were removed from the notes and participants were identified only by a pseudonym in the quotes.

The participating countries were: Albania, Bangladesh, Bolivia, Brazil, Cambodia, Chile, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Ghana, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, India, Indonesia, Mexico, Mongolia, Myanmar, Nepal, Nicaragua, Pacific Timor-Leste, Peru, Senegal, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Uganda.

“I WOULD LIKE FAMILY MEMBERS TO LISTEN AND DISCUSS DOMESTIC AND OTHER ISSUES WITH ONE ANOTHER.”

CHILD IN THAILAND



WE WANT TO BE INVOLVED

Children and young people across the world say that it is essential they are involved in action and processes to prevent and respond to violence. They have a strong desire to participate in activities that prevent violence. They want their voices to be heard by those in power – stakeholders, policy makers, and local representatives – to contribute to change.

Children and young people are keen to participate in a campaign to end violence and are confident that they can influence their peers, communities and decision makers in groups or networks. They have this confidence because in many places where World Vision works with them, children are already organising themselves to take action on violence committed against them and their peers. They simply want more opportunities to do this.

Children and young people want to be involved in a wide variety of ways, from very simple and practical activities to sophisticated policy development. Their suggestions range from forming community watch groups and putting up cameras and lights in the streets, to addressing parliamentarians and government officials to present their calls to action and ideas.

Children’s creativity is evident in the breadth of their suggestions about how to raise awareness. They talk about using social media campaigns, video clips on TV, messages on the radio, in newspapers, and on Facebook, distributing flyers, posters on the streets, organising petitions, flash mobs and marches.

It takes a world to end violence against children – Internal report

“WHAT BOTHERS ME IS THAT PEOPLE HIT CHILDREN; THESE CHILDREN GET HURT AND IT GENERATES MORE VIOLENCE TOWARDS CHILDREN.”

IVÁN, 10, MEXICO

“PEOPLE SHOULD HAVE MORE RESPONSIBILITY, PARTICULARLY IF THEY ARE PARENTS, BECAUSE THERE ARE PARENTS WHO HIT THEIR CHILDREN BECAUSE OF THEIR SCHOOL GRADES.”

SALVADOR, 8, CHILE



“ORGANISE A GLOBAL EVENT, WHERE ONE OR TWO REPRESENTATIVES FROM EACH COUNTRY GET OPPORTUNITY TO SHARE THEIR ACTIONS TO STOP VIOLENCE AGAINST CHILDREN.”

SAYMA, 13, BANGLADESH

“THE MESSAGE WE WANT TO SEND TO OTHER CHILDREN IS WHEREVER YOU ARE, WE NEED TO UNITE OURSELVES - TO FIGHT AGAINST VIOLENCE LIKE EXPLOITATION, VERBAL AND SEXUAL ABUSES, FORCED MARRIAGES AND HARSH LABOUR.”

FATOU, 17, SENEGAL



WAYS WE WANT TO BE INVOLVED

In **ALBANIA**, children and young people say they want to promote positive models and have awareness campaigns on child protection in the form of conferences, flash mobs, social theatre and entertainment activities. “We have to bring examples of children who have experienced violence and who have been offered assistance and are now living free of violence, to show ways in which these problems can be solved.”

“TEACHERS AND PARENTS SHOULD NOT BEAT CHILDREN EASILY, THEY SHOULD CONTROL THEMSELVES.”

CHILD IN CHINA



In **BANGLADESH**, children say they want to strengthen their child forum to engage with the government. “We, as child and youth forum members, can demand a stop to violence against children in our areas. We can organise seminars, yard meetings and chant slogans to stop the violence.”

In **BOLIVIA**, children and young people propose using social media and technologies to sensitise people about violence, especially in schools and public places.

In **BRAZIL**, children and young people suggest organising forums to build awareness about the rights and duties of the community to end violence against children.

CHILEAN children suggest using technology such as mobile phone applications. They want to raise awareness using simple programmes, about what discipline and behaviour is appropriate.

In **CHINA**, children want to engage with other children through games and plays in order to learn about how to protect themselves and to demand greater support to end violence.

Children and young people in **COLOMBIA** say they want to start with families and teachers when talking about good practice and values and suggest collecting testimonies of child survivors to share with both children and adults. They want to promote self-care activities, and create social media campaigns to reduce violence against children, particularly cyberbullying.

Young people in **COSTA RICA** want to organise door-to-door campaigns, flyer distributions and large outdoor events to discuss violence against children. Children suggest conducting in-depth research: “We cannot speak without knowing. We need to be informed and to know how to get people’s attention, in order to make the speeches less boring.”

In **GHANA**, children say they want to work with traditional and religious leaders to stop them conducting illegal child marriages. They also want to become peer educators and “watch dogs” in their community to report child protection violations, produce communication materials on violence against children for public display, and utilise radio and media discussion on violence issues that affect children.

GUATEMALAN children say understanding the topic in-depth is key and suggest watching videos of previous campaigns in order to learn from them. They propose mapping cases of violence in the community, organising workshops in schools, marching in communities with





children and parents, spreading information about where to report cases of violence and disseminating messages across media networks.

In **HAITI**, children and young people suggest providing sessions for children and adults who commit violence against children and using a public awareness campaign about the effects of violence on children’s lives, and the responsibilities of adults to end it.

Children and young people in **HONDURAS** suggest messaging on food packaging and short films to promote and raise awareness of ending violence against children. They want to involve civil organisations, the government and the church. Children say they want to be empowered by knowing more about the laws, different forms of violence against children and how to report cases.

Children with disabilities in **INDIA** want to be involved in all levels of planning to develop creative awareness-raising materials. They want to campaign by going door-to-door with children’s groups and organising village activities.

In **INDONESIA**, children and young people want to use the arts to spread information about child protection within their communities. They talk about carnivals, musical performances, videos and films.

In **MEXICO**, children especially want to emphasise that violence against them is a crime. To do so, they suggest asking adults to sign a petition, organising marches with a slogan, hold sessions with children to improve friendships between classmates, open dialogues with fathers, circulate flyers on children’s rights, and give tips on how to end violence against children.

MONGOLIAN children suggest making posters and videos about violence against children, as well as ongoing and frequent TV and online advertisements on anti-bullying and domestic violence.

In **MYANMAR**, children and young people say they want to work with adults to stop the violence. To accomplish this, they want to raise awareness within the general public about violence and child protection laws, educate parents about the effects of violence and inform people how to respond to the threat of violence using video clips, Facebook, pamphlets, educational sessions, and informative slogans in the media.

Children in **NEPAL** say they could engage the public through house-to-house campaigns and street drama to promote violence-free villages.



It takes a world to end violence against children – Internal report

“PROVIDE GOOD TRAINING FOR PEOPLE WHO ARE BEING VIOLENT AGAINST CHILDREN TO HELP THEM UNDERSTAND THE EFFECTS OF VIOLENCE ON THE LIVES OF THE CHILDREN.”

CHILD IN HAITI

“THERE ARE
LOT OF
AVENUES AND
POSSIBILITIES
TO WORK
AGAINST
VIOLENCE,
AND WE
CAN WORK
TOGETHER.”

CHILD IN SRI LANKA



In **NICARAGUA**, children and young people want training for their parents to actively involve them in the campaign. They propose that campaign organisers work with the church to disseminate messages against violence. Children and young people suggest engaging in the campaign using peer-to-peer methodologies, which is a powerful tool in disseminating messages about ending violence against children across communities.

In **PERU**, children recommend planning rallies with an emphasis on ending violence against children. They suggest workshops for parents to reflect on violence, especially looking at the difference between discipline and violence. They recommend the use of more statistical information on violence against children.

In **SENEGAL**, children and young people propose running awareness-raising campaigns at cultural events, and using social networks to spread their messages. Senegalese children suggest using simple, creative approaches to help understand violence against children as major issue to be addressed.

In **SOUTH AFRICA**, young people want to develop awareness of child abuse. They suggest creating an opportunity for them to meet with the country's president to inform him of the issues facing children in South Africa.

In **SRI LANKA**, they want to use information about violence when talking to parliament ministers. They talk about developing awareness programmes for parents, specifically on drug prevention for fathers. They propose conducting awareness campaigns within their communities using banners and posters in the streets. They suggest a residential camp for youth to work together on the campaign design.

In **THAILAND**, children and young people want to use creative activities in the community and produce online media such as fun and interesting applications with content about issues of violence. They want to produce “a short film about the issue of violence, having real children who experienced violence tell their stories” and to use poetry and song writing contests about ending violence against children.

Children and young people in **TIMOR-LESTE** suggest working with police to raise awareness in communities, schools and churches. They want to focus their advocacy on parental behavioural changes and stopping child labour.

In **UGANDA**, children and young people want to strengthen community dialogue and use children's clubs to have spaces for open discussion about violence against children. They want to expand peace clubs to promote education and awareness to end violence, including the participation of children and young people.



AND NOT JUST US

Across the world, children and young people suggest activities aimed at parents, teachers, and religious and community leaders; the people they say are important to ensuring no form of violence against children is tolerated. They want to see more awareness-raising programmes for parents and teachers. They suggest organising community dialogue to engage with parents, caregivers and community members. Children say they want to help educate parents about how to prevent violence, and to involve other adults such as police, community leaders and religious leaders in World Vision's campaign in order to have a stronger impact on the general public.

“NOWADAYS, PARENTS ARE ARRANGING MARRIAGE CEREMONY FOR THEIR DAUGHTERS WHO ARE BELOW 18 WITHOUT INFORMING RELATIVES, NOT EVEN THE GIRLS. CHILDREN ARE BOUND BY THEIR PARENTS.” CHILD IN BANGLADESH

Suggestions from children, to help build their skills to influence an end to violence against children.

Children want to know how to...

- ▶ Influence policy and legislation
- ▶ Organise an effective campaign, creatively reach more people by creating slogans
- ▶ Discuss violence against children with both children and adults, effectively
- ▶ Make short films and messages for TV and radio
- ▶ Disseminate messages on social media and through the media
- ▶ Improve public speaking and communications skills to develop enough confidence to speak openly about the issues
- ▶ Organise flash mobs, rallies, marches and petitions in communities
- ▶ Facilitate sessions with parents, teachers, and community leaders on violence
- ▶ Document cases of violence, to strengthen voices of survivors
- ▶ Conduct peer-education activities
- ▶ Collect testimonies of parents whose behaviour changed after education
- ▶ Map cases of violence in the community

Children want to learn...

- ▶ The danger and impact of violence
- ▶ The various forms of violence
- ▶ How to say no to inappropriate touch
- ▶ Good parenting practices and positive discipline
- ▶ Child abuse legislation, the child protection system and how and where to report cases of violence
- ▶ Ways to protect us from violence
- ▶ Sex education, including how to interpret body language and about sexual rights

This report was written and produced by the global child participation team, Patricio Cuevas-Parra and Tiffany Tao Joiner. Report design by Carol Moskot Design + Direction. © World Vision International 2016

“IF WE RECEIVE THE SUPPORT AND HELP WE NEED, I’M SURE THAT ONE DAY, ME AND ALL MY FRIENDS WILL LIVE HAPPY AND WILL NOT SUFFER VIOLENCE.”

ANISA, 15, ALBANIA