

# Empowered Through Faith



The role and influence of faith in World Vision's field programming and organisational culture in four contexts in the Middle East and Eastern Europe Region: Albania, Georgia, Jerusalem-West Bank-Gaza and Iraq

# Acknowledgements

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Five years ago, we were shallow and impulsive due to the stress and issues we had. We did not communicate properly with our children or as a couple. We used to resort to violence in the past, but that has changed now. There will not ever be any violence in our family.

Mustafa, 44 years old



## Acronyms

CoH	Channels of Hope
CP	Child Protection
CPM	Core Project Model
CWB	Child Well-Being
CWBO	Child Well-Being Objective
DAP	Developmental Assets Profile
EWV	Empowered World View
F&D	Faith and Development
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
JWG	Jerusalem-West Bank-Gaza
KII	Key Informant Interviews
MEAL	Monitoring Evaluation Accountability & Learning
MEER	Middle East and Eastern Europe Region
MHPSS	Mental Health and Psycho-Social Support



# Table of contents



1. Executive Summary	6
2. Introduction	10
3. Research Framework	12
4. Methodology	13
5. Findings / Discussion	14
5.1. Impact of Faith and Development (F&D) activities on CWBOs	14
5.2. Impact of F&D activities on parenting and family relationships	25
5.3. Impact of F&D activities on positive parenting skills of surveyed caregivers	26
5.4. Impact of F&D activities on caregiver's support of learning skills	28
5.5. Partnering with faith leaders to fight the root causes of vulnerability	29
5.6. Influence of Christian faith on World Vision's organisational culture, staff, and working environment	33
6. Recommendations	36
7. Conclusion	39



# 1. Executive summary

As a Christian humanitarian, development, and advocacy organisation, World Vision approaches child well-being holistically as physical, mental, social, and spiritual well-being within thriving families, communities, and nations. In this pursuit, World Vision seeks mutually transformative relationships with children, parents, communities, colleagues, supporters, churches, and other faith communities and partners who share positive values and dedication to improving children's lives. Such an approach also requires that spiritual, material, social, and political root causes of child vulnerability are understood and addressed.

These aims are achieved through implementing the World Vision Core Project Models (CPM). CPMs are sets of evidence-based practices for improving child well-being, in a close alliance with local partners, many of which are faith-based.

CPMs are made up of processes and interventions that have been found to work across various contexts in delivering sustainable results. These applied models allow for flexibility in respect to local traditions and empower people in their respective contexts. Expressions of faith are different in each context and we recognise faith partners as instrumental for the transformational change.

These are the faith-based core project models:



## Celebrating Families

is a faith-based CPM which aims for children to have positive and caring relationships with families, allowing them to thrive spiritually, socio-emotionally, and physically. It contributes to improving the behaviour and attitudes of parents and caregivers on a deeper level to create safe and loving environments in families and to address harmful social and cultural norms through church and faith leaders and community influencers.



## Channels of Hope

is a faith-based CPM that transforms faith leaders to influence socio-cultural norms, beliefs, and practices that lie at the root of targeted child well-being issues, such as violence against children, gender inequality, maternal and newborn health, etc. Channels of Hope mobilises faith groups to take direct, collective action to support child well-being in contextually appropriate, sustainable ways.



## Empowered Worldview

is a faith-based behaviour change model that addresses dependency mindsets and promotes individual empowerment among impoverished communities. The Empowered Worldview curriculum uses biblical principles to engage individuals on identity, self-esteem, hope, and vision for the future to become agents of change within their own lives, families, and communities.

There is a lack of evidence about the impact of Faith and Development (F&D) interventions as part of integrated programming in the Middle East and Eastern Europe, contexts where World Vision works. The organisation undertook research to explore *to what extent F&D evidence-based models and associated activities influence core well-being outcomes in girls and boys, such as life skills and resilience, as well as parenting skills in caregivers. The research also explored the impact of World Vision Christian identity on the organisation's culture and the impact of partnering with faith leaders to address the root causes of children's vulnerability.*

## Impact of F&D interventions on children's life skills and resilience

The research confirmed a significant positive impact on girls' and boys' core life skills and resilience in all four contexts, but in varying degrees. In the context of life skills, F&D interventions significantly impact how girls and boys resolve conflict, learn to establish boundaries, engage with friends, think through everyday issues, use personal time, and overall feel empowered and more empathetic.


The difference between country results can be explained by the intensity of children's engagement and inclusion in F&D activities. Research confirmed that core life skills improvement is less feasible in short-term projects and humanitarian settings, where activities are focused more on addressing basic needs and one-time support. In addition, contexts where children had lower life skills demonstrated a more significant increase due to F&D interventions, which confirms why focusing on the vulnerable is essential and effective.

To this end, an ex-post facto design was developed with convenience sampling of

 **429**  
children


 **406**  
caregivers

 in Albania, Georgia,  
JWG, and Iraq

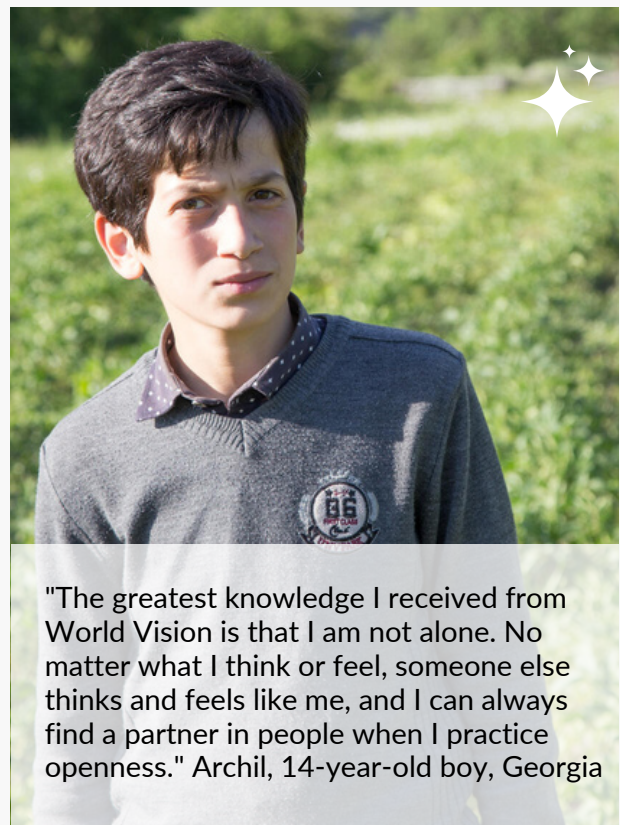
 Surveys took place in  
May and June 2022.

All participants in Albania, Georgia, and JWG were part of World Vision F&D programmes for at least two years. In Iraq, children and caregivers were selected from grant-funded projects with less than a one-year exposure to F&D.

Quantitative results were complemented with findings from:

 Key informant interviews  
with 16 caregivers, 12  
children, 8 faith leaders

 Four focus group discussions  
with World Vision staff.



"The greatest knowledge I received from World Vision is that I am not alone. No matter what I think or feel, someone else thinks and feels like me, and I can always find a partner in people when I practice openness." Archil, 14-year-old boy, Georgia

## Impact of F&D activities on caregivers' positive parenting and support of learning skills

All adult participants in the four countries reported significant improvements in support of children's learning and positive parenting skills. This might indicate that capacity building and empowerment efforts are effective with adults in both developmental and humanitarian settings.

The overall majority of surveyed caregivers in Albania, Georgia, Iraq, and JWG showed fair and good results on their positive parenting skills. Most of them acknowledged the contribution of World Vision to their positive parenting skills through improved relationships and communication with children and improved anger management and self-awareness. Similarly, the majority also recognised World Vision's role in improving the ability to teach their children and to encourage their learning. Caregivers reported being more present with children and less concerned with achievements and homework.



"We used to forbid children from doing lots of things, but we were wrong; we learned that children need to express themselves to grow the right way." Yohan, 43-year-old man, Iraq

## Impact of partnering with faith leaders in addressing the root causes of vulnerability

Faith partners in all four countries recognised World Vision as a committed partner whose staff consistently acts in line with World Vision's Christian values. Moreover, most interviewed partners shared that World Vision helped faith communities expand their traditional roles and better understand the importance of social engagement.

Similarly, World Vision staff shared that partnering with faith partners led to mutual transformation and learning. While faith partners supported World Vision staff in spiritual growth and better outreach in

communities, World Vision helped by building partners' capacities in child well-being, development, human rights, protection from violence, better parenting, and overall social engagement.

Both Christian and Muslim faith partners also stated that World Vision equipped them with knowledge and skills to address the root causes of vulnerability, strengthen the role of the family, and equip caregivers with positive disciplinary skills. Joint endeavours in communities with World Vision staff opened new horizons for working with children and families. This led to a holistic approach toward children and communities. And it transformed faith partners in terms of their response to conflict situations, complex family relationships, and social issues in general.





## Impact of World Vision's Christian identity on staff and partners

Staff in all four offices acknowledged that they are deeply motivated by World Vision's Christian values, which makes World Vision different from other NGOs and positively affects the quality of their engagement in communities. While staff spirituality is intentionally nurtured, the organisation invests in creating an inclusive environment for all. To that end, non-Christian staff also admitted experiencing respect and unity with others, grounded in shared values.

World Vision partners and beneficiaries see that staff reflect Christian values and appreciate how World Vision engages externally in transparency, consistency, joint planning, honouring of agreements, etc., making World Vision a trusted and respected partner for all. This report provides evidence of the developmental impact that World Vision has achieved by working with local faith actors in a culturally appropriate manner.

Staff shares that World Vision's identity shapes their mutual relationships and external conduct. They believe that the overarching goals and values of World Vision, with its excellent reputation and history of engagement with communities, make World Vision an attractive partner, trusted by communities from different faiths and denominations.

## Recommendations

Twelve recommendations for programming and three for donors come out of the research. They include, among others, building capacity for **integrating gender-responsive F&D CPMs** and activities into every project to ensure behaviour change and social norm transformation, while leveraging partnership **with faith leaders locally**.

Donors are encouraged to **invest in life skills, adolescent empowerment, and positive parenting interventions** that target the improvement of social, emotional and behavioural skills in children, as well as parents, along with family well-being and psycho-social support.



## 2. Introduction

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World Vision approaches child well-being in holistic terms, as physical, mental, social, and spiritual well-being within thriving families, communities, and nations. In this pursuit, World Vision seeks mutually transformative relationships with children, parents, communities, colleagues, supporters, churches, and other faith communities and partners.

World Vision focuses on helping the most vulnerable children overcome poverty and experience the fullness of life. This means the holistic well-being of girls and boys within transformed families, communities, and societies characterised by dignity, justice, peace, and hope, as God intended. It is a journey of shared learning and change.

Such an approach requires that spiritual, material, social, and political root causes of child vulnerability are understood and addressed. We build on local values, held by children, their caregivers and communities. Spiritual nurture is integral to our holistic approach to human development. We respond to God's profound love for children through our relationships and actions, with the desire that children in any context might experience fullness of life.

These aims are, *inter alia*, achieved through implementing the World Vision Core Project Models (CPM). Project models are sets of evidence-based practices for improving child well-being. They are made up of processes and interventions that have been found to work across various contexts to design and implement cost-effective programmes and deliver sustainable results. These are the faith-based core project models.



## Celebrating families

Celebrating Families is a faith-based core project model which aims for children to have positive and caring relationships with families, allowing them to thrive spiritually, socio-emotionally, and physically. It contributes to improving the behaviour and attitudes of parents and caregivers on a deeper level to create safe and loving environments in families, and to address harmful social and cultural norms through church and faith leaders and community influencers.



## Channels of Hope

Channels of Hope (CoH) is a faith-based project model that transforms faith leaders to influence socio-cultural norms, beliefs, and practices that lie at the root of targeted child well-being issues, such as violence against children, gender inequality, maternal and newborn health, etc. CoH mobilises faith groups to take direct, collective action to support child well-being in contextually appropriate, sustainable ways.



## Empowered Worldview

Empowered Worldview (EWW) is a faith-based behaviour change model that seeks to address dependency mindsets and promote individual empowerment among people living in poverty. The EWW curriculum uses biblical principles to engage individuals on identity, self-esteem, hope, and vision for the future to become agents of change within their own lives, families, and communities.



There is a lack of evidence about the impact of Faith and Development (F&D) interventions as part of integrated programming in the Middle East and Eastern Europe Region (MEER) contexts. This study explores the transformative role of F&D interventions, integrated into World Vision development and response programming, and how project models influence children's developmental outcomes and resilience, family relationships, and child-rearing outcomes.

The study also assesses the influence of Christian faith on World Vision's organisational culture, staff well-being, and working environment, and the effectiveness and impact of working with faith leaders in communities to address the root causes of child vulnerability.

# 3. Research framework

Using an ex-post facto design, the research explored how F&D approaches and activities influence core well-being outcomes for girls and boys, such as resilience and life skills, and parenting skills, such as positive parenting and support for learning skills. The research also explored the impact of Christian identity on Christian and non-Christian staff in the field and in the workplace, and the impact of partnering with faith leaders on addressing root causes of vulnerability.

Figure 1: Research Framework





## 4. Methodology

The study adopted a mixed-method approach in the surveys and key informant interviews (KIIs) with children and caregivers, KIIs with faith leaders, and FGDs with staff to gain an in-depth and multi-faceted overview of the F&D impact in the four different contexts. The samples of children and caregivers were selected by convenience, based on Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning (MEAL) and field operations decisions.

Surveyed children and caregivers in Albania, JWG, and Georgia benefitted from World Vision activities in communities where F&D activities were implemented in development setting for the last two years. In Iraq, children and caregivers were selected from grant-funded relief and nexus projects,<sup>1</sup> with one or less than one year of exposure to F&D activities (Table 1).

Countries	Children surveyed	KIIs with children	Caregivers surveyed	KIIs with caregivers	FGD with Staff	KIIs with Faith leaders
Albania	103	two girls and two boys	100	three women and three men	1 FGD	two faith leaders
Georgia	100	one girl and one boy	75	one woman and one man	1 FGD	two faith leaders
JWG	186	two girls and two boys	132	two women and two men	1 FGD	two faith leaders
Iraq	40	one girl and one boy	99	two women and two men	1 FGD	two faith leaders

Table 1: Sample size

The survey tools relied on reliable and valid instruments to measure life skills and resilience in children. Children's life skills were measured using the Development Asset Profile (DAP)<sup>2</sup>, and resilience was measured using the Child and Youth Resilience Measure.<sup>3</sup>

The data collection took place during April and May 2022. Considering COVID-19 preventive measures, the quantitative and qualitative data were collected remotely through phone calls with caregivers and children. The data collection followed the minimum standards for consulting with girls and boys, developed by the Inter-Agency Working Group on Children's Participation.

The study limitations are related to the ex-post facto design, which examines past occurrences (in this case, F&D activities) to understand the current state of outcome variables (CWB and parenting outcomes), as told by survey participants, carrying a certain level of subjectivity.

<sup>1</sup> The Nexus approach is about more coordinated, integrated and cost-effective planning and management of the use of natural resources across sectors. By fairly addressing trade-offs and intelligently capturing synergies, overall security of resources can be achieved more optimally compared to a traditional fragmented approach.

<sup>2</sup> User Guide for the Developmental Assets Profile, Search Institute, January 2016, <https://www.search-institute.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/DAP-User-Guide-1-2016.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> Child and Youth Resilience Measure and Adult Resilience Measure, <https://cyrm.resilienceresearch.org/>

# 5. Findings / Discussion

## 5.1 Impact of F&D activities on Child Well-Being Objectives (CWBOs)

### 5.1.1 Socio-demographic profile of surveyed children

Surveyed children have an average age of 14 in Albania and JWG. They are slightly older in Georgia (15 years old) and younger in Iraq (12 years old). Gender is equally distributed in the four contexts. Almost all of them attend formal education, consider themselves healthy individuals, and are free of physical and mental diseases (Table 2).



Total sample		Albania N=103	Georgia N=100	JWG N=183	Iraq N=40
Age	Mean (±sd)	13.9 (±2.2)	14.7 (±2.0)	13.9 (±1.6)	11.6 (±1.4)
Gender	Girls	57 (55%)	66 (66%)	129 (69%)	21 (58%)
	Boys	46 (45%)	34 (34%)	57 (31%)	15 (42%)
Formal education	No	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	3 (2%)	0 (0%)
	Yes	103 (100%)	100 (100%)	183 (98%)	40 (100%)
Healthy person	No	1 (1%)	11 (11%)	2 (1%)	3 (8%)
	Yes	102 (99%)	89 (89%)	183 (98%)	33 (92%)

Table 2: Socio-demographic profile of surveyed children.

### 5.1.2 Impact of F&D activities on external asset categories of surveyed children

For measuring F&D activities' impact on youth life skills, the DAP tool was used. Out of 58 DAP items, 26 tap external assets. On the external asset side, the DAP scales are:<sup>4</sup>

- I. Support** – support from parents, family, and other adults; parent-adolescent communication; advice and help from parents; helpful neighbours; and caring school environment.
- II. Empowerment** – feeling safe at home, school, and in the neighbourhood; feeling valued, and having useful jobs and roles.
- III. Boundaries and Expectations** – having good role models; clear rules at home and school; encouragement from parents and teachers; and monitoring by family and neighbours.
- IV. Constructive Use of Time** – participation in a religious or spiritual activity; involvement in a sport, club, or group; creative activities; and quality time at home.



### **Support:**

The findings showed that more than half of the surveyed children in Albania (55%) and JWG (65%) and 88% in Georgia and Iraq are supported by their family, school, and neighbourhood, suggesting diverse asset-based strengths involving parent-adolescent communication, family support, caring, encouragement and support extending outside the family to the neighbourhood school and community (Figure 2).

Children with good and high scores on the support scale were asked whether their participation in World Vision F&D activities contributed to strengthening or acquiring the Support assets. In Albania, 76% of children said their participation contributed directly to the Support asset, while almost half (49%) in JWG said the same. In Georgia and Iraq, the percentage of children who said F&D activities contributed to the Support asset was less, 9% and 3%, respectively (Figure 3). The nature of programming can explain this (e.g., relief interventions in Iraq) or high baseline scores to start with (Iraq and Georgia).

### **Empowerment:**

The findings showed that more than three-quarters of children in Georgia (84%) and Iraq (78%) and almost half in JWG (56%) and Albania (46%) are empowered, suggesting feeling safe across many contexts, and valued and respected by others. (Figure 2). Children with good and high scores on the Empowerment scale were asked whether their participation in World Vision F&D activities

contributed to strengthening or acquiring the Empowerment asset. In Albania, 77% of children were confident in saying that World Vision contributed directly or strengthened their Empowerment asset. The percentage is less in JWG (53%) and Georgia (26%), while in Iraq, only 8% of children were confident about World Vision's impact on their Empowerment assets (Figure 3).

### **Boundaries and Expectations:**

The findings showed that the majority of surveyed children in Iraq (83%) and Georgia (73%) and almost half of surveyed children in Albania (58%) and JWG (54%) scored high on the Boundaries and Expectations scale, which suggests the report of consistently clear rules and consequences at home, school and in the neighbourhood, plus positive role models among friends, family, and outside the family (Figure 2).

Children with good and high scores on the Boundaries and Expectations scale also attributed strengthening or acquiring the Boundaries and Expectations assets to F&D interventions. Seventy-eight percent of children in Albania and 54% in JWG said that World Vision activities contributed directly to their Boundaries and Expectations assets. The percentage of children who said the same in Georgia was less (10%), while in Iraq, none were confident about World Vision's contribution to Boundaries and Expectations assets (Figure 3).

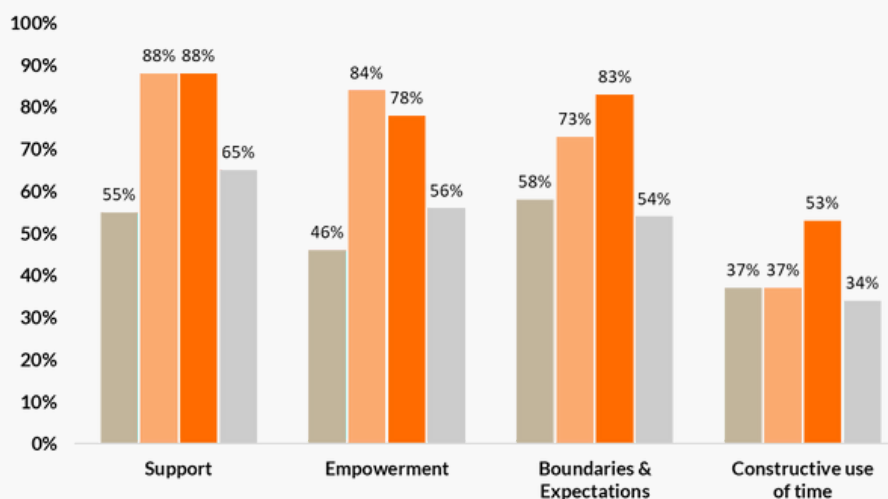
### **Constructive use of time:**

The Constructive use of time scale indicates children's report of extra-curricular involvement in four areas (1) religious or spiritual activity, (2) a sports club or other group, (3) creative activities, and (4) family time. The only way to obtain a score in the high range is to rate all four items as frequent. The findings showed that almost one-third of children in JWG (34%), Albania (37%), and Georgia (37%), and nearly half in Iraq (53%) reported activities in the four areas (Figure 2).

Notably, 81% of children in Albania, 58% in JWG, 17% in Georgia, and 4% in Iraq were confident in attributing good or high scores to World Vision interventions (Figure 3).

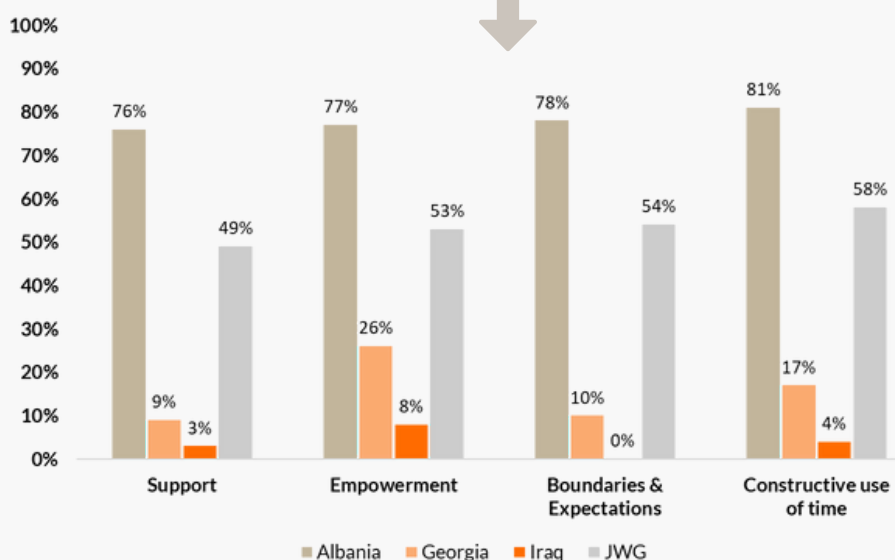
### Prevalence of external assets categories

Figure 2: Percentage of surveyed children with good and high results on the external assets categories



### Impact of F&D on external assets categories

Figure 3: Percentage of surveyed children with good and high results on the external assets categories which are influenced by the F&D activities on their external assets categories



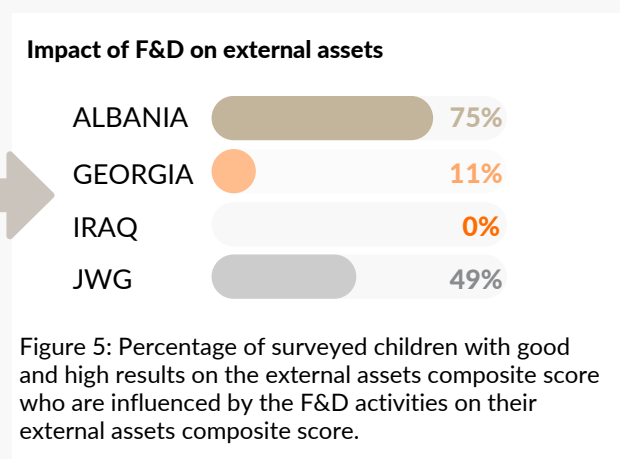
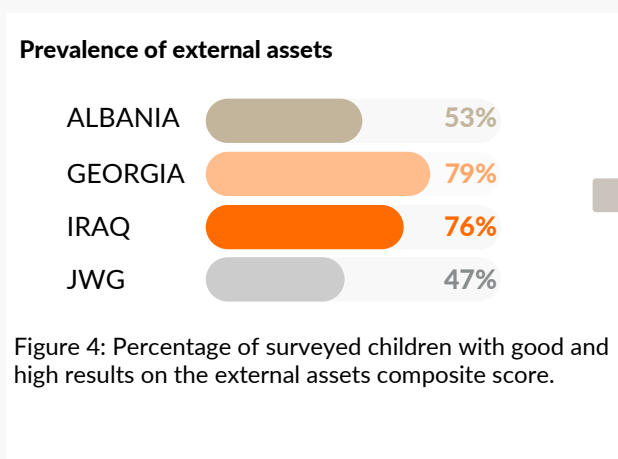


### External asset composite score:

The External Asset Score is the average of the scale scores for the four internal asset categories: I. Support, II. Empowerment, III. Boundaries and Expectations, and IV. Constructive Use of Time.

Seventy-nine percent of surveyed children in Georgia, 76% in Iraq, 53% in Albania, and 47% in JWG had excellent and good external assets (Figure 4). In comparison, 75% of children in Albania, 49% in JWG, and 11% in Georgia were confident about the role played by World Vision in acquiring the overall external assets, unlike Iraq, where children seemed not to be influenced by World Vision activities in their external assets (Figure 5).

As mentioned above, this can be explained by the nature of relief programming and by the fact that external assets in Iraqi children were high from the beginning.



KII findings from Albania, Georgia, and JWG complemented the quantitative survey results. Interviewed children said participating in F&D activities taught them how to communicate effectively, openly, and smoothly with their parents. They mentioned how these activities helped strengthen their bonds with their parents and build an open and conflict-free culture at home.



"My participation at the Impact Club and summer camps helped me to have discussions with my parents which are not only related to school matters, but also social matters."  
Alesia, 12-year-old girl, Albania



"During the activities, I learned how to communicate with my parents and tell them about my needs without being shy."  
Jana, 16-year-old girl, JWG

Children also said they learned how to communicate effectively and openly with their peers through participating in World Vision activities.

“

"I joined World Vision when I was in Grade 6. I attended many trainings, had fun, and learned new things; then I was involved in activities where I could help other children, such as the anti-bullying circle." Nini, 16-year-old girl, Georgia

Children also mentioned that they learned how to support and advise their peers, manage and resolve conflict, share confidences, and be loyal.

“

"I have positive interactions with my classmates and schoolmates, they come to me asking for advice, and I am always ready to help them with confidence." Jana, a 16-year-old girl, JWG

Children also added that participating in the activities allowed them to voice their own opinions, helped them think for themselves, and gave them a feeling of empowerment.

“

"If I did not participate in World Vision activities, I would still be the same as before. I was not a good person. I was introverted and more afraid of stating my mind than how I am now." Archil, 14-year-old boy, Georgia

“

"My relationship with my parents has improved; our communication is clearer and calmer." Stefan, 12-year-old boy, Albania

“

"The activities with World Vision made me self-confident and contributed to building my personality." Ahmad, JWG

Children also learned about rules and expectations in the classroom. This kind of learning could serve as a guide to help them stay on track and out of trouble, continue to practice the good manners that were taught in primary school, and feel safe and supported in school.

“

"The activities I had here included rules and discipline, which were great takeaways for me." Enkelejda, 16-year-old, Albania

Finally, children mentioned how these activities affect their time use and engagement in extra-curricular activities.

“

"Through my participation in these activities, I have learned that sports are beneficial and can improve my overall health, and I engaged myself in many sports activities. I wish we could continue the activities even after we finish school." Jana, JWG

KII findings in Iraq showed that World Vision has minimal impact on external asset skills. Interviewed children mentioned that activities they attended enabled them to make friends and spend less time alone.

“

"I met new friends, and was able to limit the use of electronic devices during summertime and do some other fun activities." Kawthar, 14-year-old girl

### Gender analysis:

The study found that boys are more likely to benefit from F&D programmes to develop external assets in JWG, including the Support asset ( $p<0.0001$ ), the Empowerment asset ( $p=0.001$ ), the Boundaries and Expectations assets ( $p<0.0001$ ) and the Constructive use of time asset ( $p=0.005$ ), even though their current levels of targeted skills were not significantly different. Other contexts did not confirm the statistically significant difference between girls and boys.

For JWG, the difference might be explained by these possible reasons: boys were more targeted and influenced by World Vision F&D interventions, girls were already advanced in measured assets, or World Vision did not add as much value. Accordingly, World Vision JWG might need to tailor interventions for girls or improve the selection procedure for girl beneficiaries.<sup>5</sup>



### 5.1.3 Impact of F&D activities on internal asset categories of surveyed children

Out of 58 DAP items, 32 tap external assets through the following scales:<sup>6</sup>

**I. Commitment to Learning** – enjoys reading and learning; caring about school; doing homework; and being encouraged to try new things.

**II. Positive Values** – standing up for one's beliefs; taking responsibility; avoiding alcohol, tobacco, and drugs; valuing honesty; having healthy behaviours; being encouraged to help others; and helping, respecting, and serving others.

**III. Social Competencies** – building friendships; appropriately expressing feelings; planning; resisting negative peer pressure; being sensitive to and accepting others; and resolving conflicts peacefully.

**IV. Positive Identity** – having optimism, locus of control, and self-esteem.

### Commitment to learning:

The findings showed that 85% of surveyed children in Georgia, 80% in Iraq, and almost half in Albania (54%) and JWG (48%) showed good and high results on the Commitment to Learning asset scale, reflecting a high degree of reported motivation to learn and active engagement in learning both in and out of school (Figure 6). Seventy-five per cent of children with good and high scores on Albania's Commitment to Learning scale, 60% in JWG, and 26% in Georgia acknowledged that World Vision activities played a significant role in acquiring this asset (Figure 7).

### Positive Values:

The findings showed that 81% of children in Georgia, 70% in Iraq, and half in JWG and Albania have good and high personal virtues such as honesty, integrity, responsibility, restraint, caring about others, and working for equality and social justice (Figure 6). World Vision contributed to the positive values for 89% of surveyed children in Albania, 81% in Georgia, and 61% in JWG (Figure 7).

<sup>5</sup> Jerusalem-West Bank-Gaza country report.

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.search-institute.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/DAP-User-Guide-1-2016.pdf>  
DAP User Guide

**Social Competencies:**

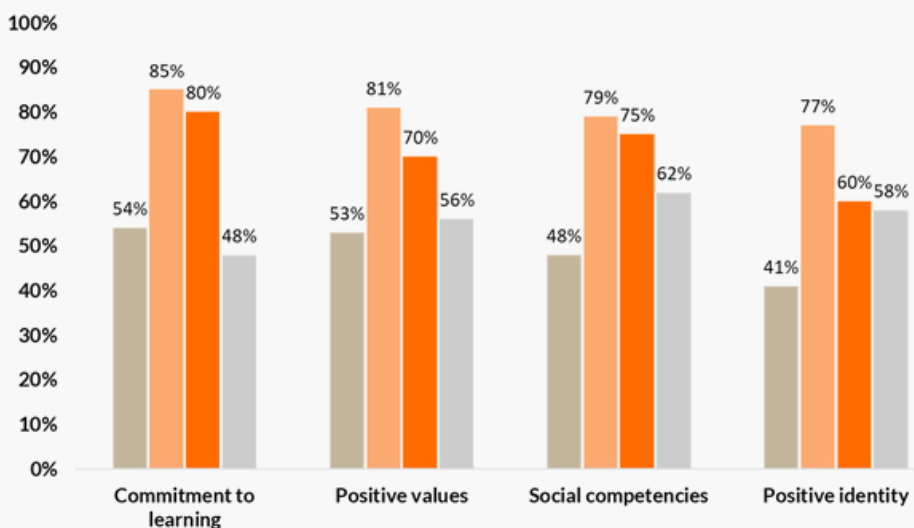
The findings showed that the majority of children in Georgia (79%) and Iraq (75%), two-thirds in JWG (62%), and almost half in Albania (48%) have assets pertaining to planning and decision-making, cultural competence and social skills involving building friendships, resisting negative peer pressure and resolving conflicts peacefully (Figure 6). For the majority of children with high and good scores in Albania (84%), Georgia (81%), and JWG (61%), World Vision played a role in contributing to this asset (Figure 7).

**Positive Identity:**

The findings showed that the majority of children in Georgia (77%), Iraq (60%), JWG (58%), and 41% of children in Albania have several strengths in their adolescent's emerging identity, including self-esteem, internal locus of control, optimism and a growing sense of purpose in life (Figure 6). The majority of children from Albania (91%), Georgia (82%) and JWG (69%) were confident about World Vision's role in acquiring Positive Identity assets. Only 6% of surveyed children from Iraq recognised World Vision's role in developing Positive Identity assets (Figure 7).

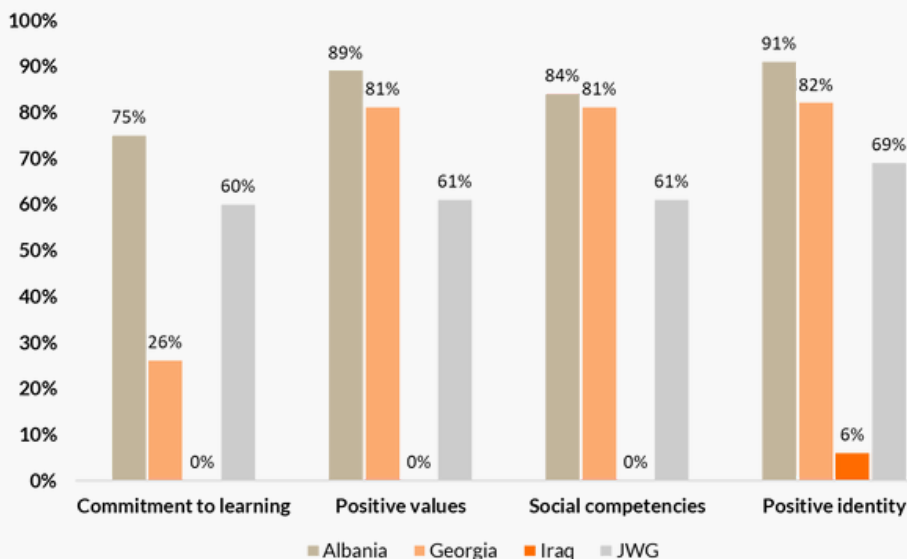
**Prevalence of internal assets categories**

Figure 6: Percentage of surveyed children with good and high results on the internal assets categories.



**Impact of F&D on internal assets categories**

Figure 7: Percentage of surveyed children with good and high results on the internal assets categories which are influenced by the F&D activities on their internal assets categories.



**Internal assets composite score:**

The Internal Asset Score is the average of the scale scores for the four internal asset categories: I. Commitment to Learning, II. Positive Values, III. Social Competencies, and IV. Positive Identity.

Eighty-three percent of surveyed children in Georgia, 73% in Iraq, 55% in JWG, and 37% in Albania showed good and high levels of internal assets in all four sub-categories: Commitment to Learning, Positive Values, Social Competencies, and Positive Identity (Figure 8).

When it comes to F&D activities' contribution to acquiring those assets, the majority of the children with good and high scores in Albania (82%), JWG (61%), and Georgia (30%) recognised World Vision's role. Similar to external assets, World Vision reportedly did not contribute to the internal assets of Iraqi children (Figure 9).

**Prevalence of internal assets**

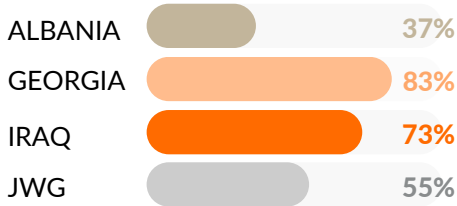


Figure 8: Percentage of surveyed children with good and high results on the internal assets composite score

**Impact of F&D on internal assets composite score**

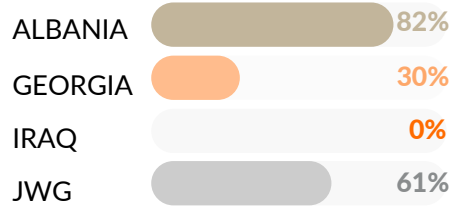


Figure 9: Percentage of surveyed children with good and high results on the internal assets composite score, who are influenced by the F&D activities on their internal assets composite score.



KII findings from Albania, Georgia, and JWG complemented the survey results. Interviewed children stressed that World Vision activities improved their ability to build new friendships.



"Summer camps help you to meet new people, my communication skills have improved, I have made many friends, and I have also learned plenty of new things." Enkelejda, Albania

Good friends and friendships are important to adolescents because they give them a sense of belonging and being valued by people other than their family. They also give confidence, security, comfort, and experience in getting along with people. In social groups, young people do new things and experiment with values, roles, identities, and ideas.

Children we interviewed stressed that World Vision activities improved their interpersonal skills, thinking ability, and overall life skills.



"During these activities, I met new people who think differently from me. This exposure enriched me and shaped my thinking ability and even my behaviour with my family and friends." Jana, JWG



"I realised that there is something else in life that we do not learn in school, such as understanding the public opinion." Archil, Georgia

Cognitive development during adolescence serves different purposes. It prepares adolescents for future careers and relationships. During adolescence, children begin thinking about what they want to do when they go on their own. They compare themselves to ideals and they explore different careers. They also start to make different life choices than they see their parents making. At this time, it is healthy for them to set important goals for the end of their adolescence and the beginning of their adult lives. In addition to gaining the ability to think more abstractly, adolescents also want to understand the psychological characteristics of their peers and others. They make guesses about how others feel. Then, they use the resulting assumptions to decide how to interact with that person or whether to interact with them at all.

Children also mentioned that World Vision activities increased their self-confidence and self-esteem and made them proud of what they do. They have the confidence to try new things and feel good about themselves.



"I lacked confidence; in class, I would not raise my hand even if I knew the answer, whereas now I have the confidence to express myself." Alesia, Albania



"If I did not participate in World Vision activities, I would not have acquired such an experience or the information I have now. I am one or two steps ahead in life compared to other children who did not go through these trainings." Nini, Georgia

Finally, the children we interviewed spoke about the contribution of World Vision activities to their commitment to school and learning.



"The activities had a very positive impact on my concentration in school. I was no longer distracted by external factors and achieved high results." Stefan, Albania



"During the activities, I learned that I could focus more and enjoy studying." Ahmad, JWG

### Gender analysis:

Similar to external assets, the inferential analysis showed a statistically significant difference only in the JWG context, where girls are more likely than boys to be committed to learning ( $p=0.005$ ) and develop their internal assets in general ( $p=0.04$ ). Moreover, when we looked at F&D activities' contribution to the internal asset categories, we found that boys are more likely to benefit from interventions in all four areas: Commitment to Learning ( $p=0,02$ ), Positive Value ( $p<0.0001$ ), Social Competencies ( $p<0.0001$ ) and Positive Identity ( $p=0.001$ ).

Girls' commitment to learning results from gender socialisation, where women are raised with the notion that they need to meet the expectations of others, be obedient, and perform well in every area of their life, including education. As for the less impactful contribution of F&D interventions, the issue is either with implemented interventions relevant for girls, as they already had those assets, or they might not have been targeted as intentionally as boys.<sup>7</sup> In the other three countries, the statistical inferential analysis showed no difference between girls and boys on all the internal asset scale categories. We also found no difference between girls and boys when we looked at F&D activities' contribution to the internal assets. Similar to external assets, this speaks to equally valuable and meaningful engagement in World Vision activities for girls and boys, which can be considered a confirmation of gender-responsive programming.<sup>8</sup>



<sup>7</sup> Jerusalem-West Bank-Gaza country report.

<sup>8</sup> *ibid.*

## 5.1.4 Impact of F&D activities on the socio-ecological resilience of surveyed children

**Socio-ecological resilience** refers to culturally relevant personal and caregiver resources that children can use to adapt to stressful situations.<sup>9</sup> Analysis shows that the majority of children in the four countries have high personal resilience, which refers to intrapersonal and interpersonal resources to cope with a stressor (Figure 10), and the majority of them have high caregiver resilience as well, which relates to characteristics associated with the important relationships shared, with either a primary caregiver or a partner or a family (Figure 11).

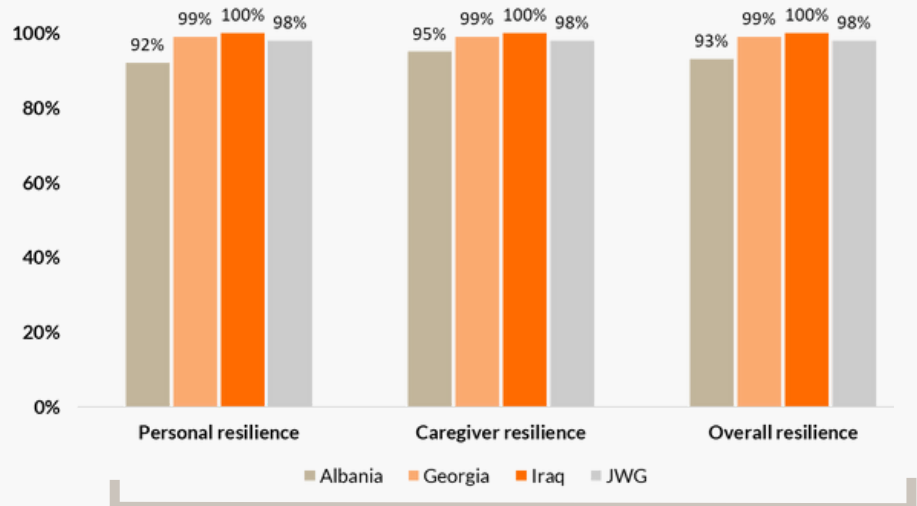
World Vision F&D activities greatly contributed to developing personal resilience and caregiver resilience in Albania (85%) and JWG (54%), and less in Georgia (17%) and Iraq (15%) (Figure 11).

### Gender analysis:

The study found that similar to other skills and assets in JWG, only boys are more likely than girls to be impacted by World Vision interventions. No gender difference was highlighted in Georgia, Albania, or in Iraq.<sup>10</sup>

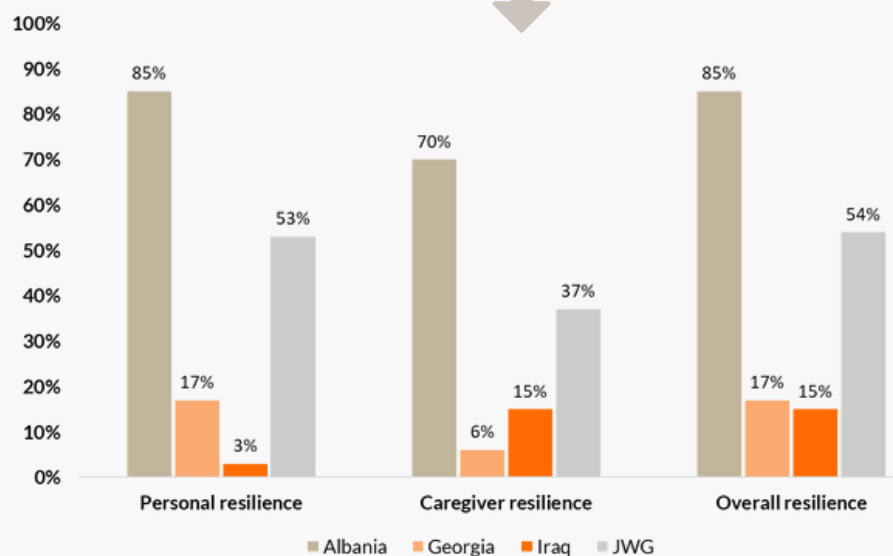
### Prevalence of socio-ecological resilience

Figure 10: Percentage of surveyed children with moderate and high results on their socio-ecological resilience



### Impact of F&D on socio-ecological resilience

Figure 11: Percentage of surveyed children with moderate and high results on their socio-ecological resilience who are influenced by the F&D activities on their socio-ecological resilience.







## 5.2 Impact of F&D activities on parenting and family relationships

### 5.2.1 Socio-demographic profile of surveyed caregivers

Caregivers who participated in the study had an average age of 40. The youngest was in Iraq, with an average of 25 years old, while the eldest was in Albania, with an average of 42 years old. The marriage age is around 25 years old in all countries. The average number of children is the highest in JWG, with four children, and the lowest in Iraq, with two children. Female caregivers are predominantly surveyed in Iraq (84%), Georgia (95%), and around half in the other two countries. The majority of the participants in JWG (43%) and Georgia (41%) have a secondary level education, while in Albania, the majority have an intermediate level education (46%), and in Iraq, university level (46%) (Table 3).

Total sample		Albania N=100	Georgia N=75	Iraq N=99	JWG N=132
Age	Mean (±sd)	42 (± 7.7)	39.5 (±8.9)	34.8 (±10.1)	40 (± 8.0)
Age at marriage	Mean (±sd)	24 (±4.8)	22.3 (±4.5)	-	24 (±4.4)
Age at first child	Mean (±sd)	25 (±5.4)	24.6 (±5.6)	26.3 (±5.5)	25 (±5.4)
Number of children	Mean (±sd)	3(±1.0)	2.4(±0.9)	1.7(±1.5)	4(±1.7)
Gender	Woman	52(52%)	71(94.7%)	83(84%)	67(51%)
	Man	48(48%)	4(5.3%)	16(16%)	65(49%)
Highest level of education	Illiterate	-	-	-	-
	Primary	-	-	7(7%)	1(1%)
	Intermediate	46(46%)	3(4%)	9(9%)	16(12%)
	Secondary	38(38%)	31(41.3%)	15(15%)	57(43%)
	Vocational	4(4%)	8(10.7%)	-	-
	Technical	-	6(8%)	23(23%)	2(2%)
	University	12(12%)	27(36%)	45(46%)	56(42%)

Table 3: Socio-demographic characteristics of surveyed caregivers.

### 5.3 Impact of F&D activities on positive parenting skills of surveyed caregivers

The overall majority of surveyed caregivers in all four countries showed fair and good results on their positive parenting skills (Figure 12). The vast majority said that World Vision, through the provided trainings, contributed directly to strengthening or shaping these skills (Figure 13).



**Prevalence of positive parenting skills**



Figure 12: Percentage of surveyed caregivers who scored fair and good on the positive parenting scale.

**Impact of F&D on positive parenting skills**

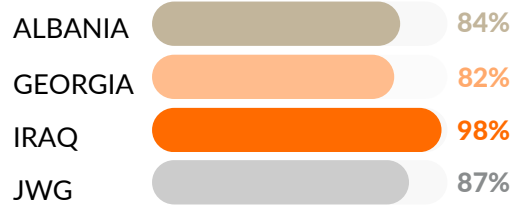


Figure 13: Percentage of surveyed caregivers with fair and good scores on the positive parenting scale and who were impacted by World Vision training in their parenting skills.

The interview findings complemented the survey findings. Caregivers of adolescents said that participating in World Vision activities affected their relationship with their children and influenced their parenting skills. Caregivers mentioned improved communication with their children, including enhanced listening ability, sharing opinions, supporting their children in their decision-making, quality time they spend together, keeping up with their interests, and being loving parents.

“World Vision activities helped me to become the guide for my children. I stopped shouting at them and dedicated more time to teach them new things, to listen to them, and to pray with them.”  
Wamid, a 41-year-old man, Iraq

“Sometimes as a parent, you get caught up in work or giving too much time to other things. Very often, work was my main priority; World Vision helped me to understand that my children need my presence.”  
Aida, 34-year-old woman, Albania

“We used to forbid children from doing lots of things, but we were wrong, we learned that children need to express themselves to grow the right way.” Yohan, 43-year-old man, Iraq



"I learned that a baby needs his mother's warmth and love when in her lap. I did not know that before attending World Vision training, and I could not bring warmth and love to my two elder children. Now that I am pregnant, I am willing to practice this approach with my third baby."  
Natia, 39-year-old woman, Georgia



"Now I am capable of understanding my children's needs, sitting with them and communicating effectively with them."  
Ferial, JWG

Regarding positive parenting skills, caregivers mentioned calmness, softness, anger management, and self-awareness as new parenting skills they acquired from participating in parenting sessions.



"I hold my children accountable for their school achievements differently now, without overstepping their boundaries and making them feel bad."  
Mustafa, 44-year-old man, Albania



"I learned how a parent's hugging can be beneficial for my children to relieve their stress. Before attending the sessions, I used to scream and hit my kids, now I use effective communication and discipline my children differently." Majid, JWG

Caregivers also said that without participating in positive parenting training, they would still have ineffective communication with their kids, resort to emotional and physical violence, and use ineffective discipline methods not based on the child's needs.



"Five years ago, we were shallow and impulsive due to the stress and issues we had. We did not communicate properly with our children or as a couple." He added: "We used to resort to violence in the past, but that has changed now. There will not ever be any violence in our family."  
Mustafa, 44-year-old man, Albania



"World Vision activities informed me a lot on dealing with adolescents, things that I did not know about before."  
Racha, 38-year-old woman, Iraq



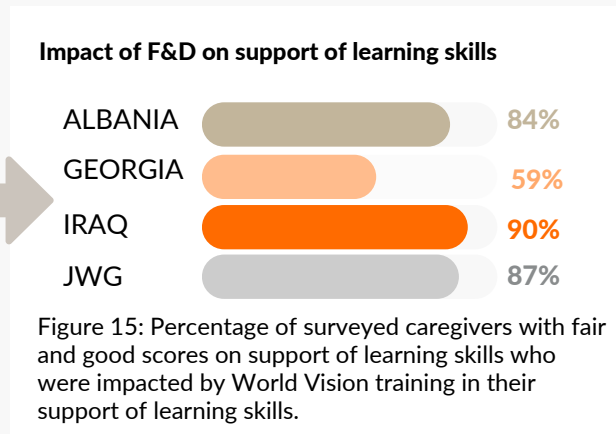
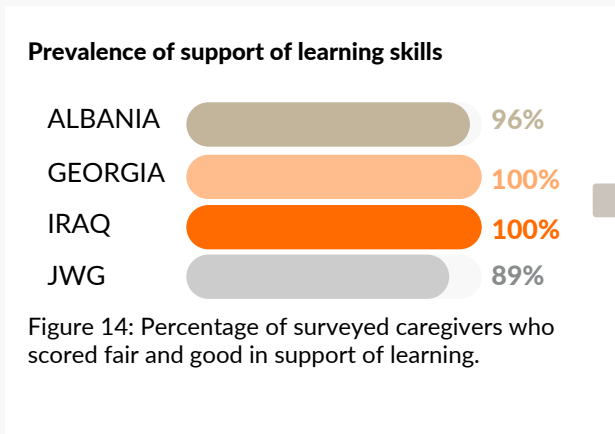
"The lectures gave us alternative methods to raise our children without resorting to violence."  
Yohan, Iraq



"It is possible that not many people out there do not talk about their method of reprimanding, shouting, yelling, but I am sure many would have thought and changed a lot in their relationship with their children in their approach."  
Teona, Georgia

## 5.4 Impact of F&D activities on caregiver's support of learning skills

The majority of surveyed caregivers in all four countries showed fair and good results for their support of learning skills (Figure 14), and most of them in JWG, Albania, and Iraq, and 59% in Georgia said that World Vision, through the training provided, contributed directly to strengthening these skills (Figure 15). It is worth mentioning that in JWG, female caregivers are more likely than male caregivers to support their children in learning ( $p < 0.0001$ ).<sup>11</sup>



The results from KIIs complemented the survey findings. Caregivers think that World Vision activities improved their ability to teach their children and encourage learning. They said they are encouraging their children more, are more present to support them, and are less obsessed with achievements and homework.

“Training sessions, material, and any type of support that I received helped me to provide the right premises for my child to have higher school achievements.” Mustafa, 44-year-old, Albania

“My son is late in his studies since he was affected by the war and its impact. I always try to guide, encourage, and help him dream for his future to motivate him.” Racha, Iraq

“I used to start homework with Mathematics because it was important to me, then I realised this is not encouraging for my child. Now I start with whatever he likes to encourage him.” She added: “I learned how to approach my children gently and ask them to finish their homework first and then to continue playing.” Natia, Georgia

“I used to put much pressure on my children. I do not do that now. We have a strategy, organise the studying calendar together, define the priorities, and take breaks too.” Ferial, JWG

Caregivers also mentioned that they have been doing many activities with children, such as family reunions, playing sports, and teaching them different techniques.

“

"Now we go out more with the children, we play different games together, we play football and volleyball with my nephews as well."  
Bashkim, 43-year-old man, Albania

“

"When we want to clean the house, we delegate one task to each family member, and we finish everything in a maximum of 30 minutes."  
Ferial, JWG



## 5.5 Partnering with faith leaders to fight the root causes of vulnerability

Faith partners encompassed by this research came from different faith backgrounds and have partnered with World Vision in various projects and activities, including World Vision's models: Celebrating Families, Impact Club, Youth Bible Curriculum, summer camps for children, Dare to Discover, Positive Parenting, Peace Road, CoH for Child Protection, advocacy for children and women's rights, awareness-raising for violence against women, and the Life Transformation through Divine Care project. Beneficiaries of these activities were children, youth and parents, and caregivers in World Vision communities.

### 5.5.1 World Vision identity and role

Church partners of World Vision Albania see World Vision as an organisation that "aims to increase the potential of each activity member or leader." In their view, the main differentiator for World Vision is providing unconditional love, which helps children see God in themselves. Children try to imitate what they see and that increases their potential. They believe the church's collaboration with World Vision in the community has been the most fruitful for two sister organisations, whose main purpose is to remain dedicated to child well-being in their respective societies.

”

"World Vision's work has been guiding and empowering. Our villages were trapped in routine, but due to collaboration in the community, they have been revitalised and modernised. They have been reoriented on the purpose of life." Partner from the Orthodox church in Albania

Partners also believe that their personal growth as leaders in collaboration with World Vision has united them, increased the level of collaboration in the team, and helped them develop knowledge and skills for children's well-being, development, rights promotion, and protection from violence. It has them with parenting skills as well.

While focusing on similar outcomes as other NGOs, World Vision has more qualified staff and a clear purpose, which makes World Vision a team member who does more than a mere job. Partners learned how to hold child-sensitive church services and have grown in partnership with other community stakeholders. Due to World Vision's cooperation, the church has become an important factor in the community.

A partner from the Georgian Orthodox Church believes that the main differentiator for World Vision is that it continuously supports children and their families.

“It seems like some small thing is being done, but in my opinion, it has tremendous consequences. That is why we started the relationship (with World Vision) from the beginning.”

“World Vision collaboration has added more value and made it more sustainable, more resourceful, and more impactful to the community.” Partner from the Evangelical Church in Albania



### 5.5.2 World Vision's contribution to the CWBOs

Partners in Albania shared that World Vision contributed to a collaboration on children's spiritual and social well-being, which was entirely neglected earlier. World Vision efforts strengthened families, supported children returning to school and achieving good results, and restored communication between husbands and wives, parents, and children.

“We have set up many groups in the parishes of the Orthodox church, we have made children aware of their rights and responsibilities, and we have taught them that they are children of God who should give love through their actions in an ever-indifferent world.” Partner from the Orthodox Church in Albania.

These partners further stated that an added value coming from working with World Vision is holistic well-being, including children's faith and strengthening families through positive parenting. World Vision's primary role has been facilitating and coordinating activities between the church and the community to achieve this. World Vision provided significant help to increase church staff capacities through various training aimed at positively impacting the community, addressing the causes of child vulnerability and developing community awareness of issues related to children's rights and protection.

“We have jointly sparked a light in families that they have a future, hope, which has value for their lives ... not to live for the sake of living, but to give value to their lives, through hope. Positivity has embodied family relations.” Partner from the Evangelical Church in Albania

“The most rewarding thing is when parents thank us for caring for their children. It shows that our services have spoken to the community.” Partner from the Evangelical Church in Albania

Orthodox partners shared that World Vision projects that embody religious values add value by promoting human dignity and giving hope, unlike those that do not include this element. Other added values worth mentioning include contributions to the understanding and development of children, living in a loving environment, and addressing violence, as well as other consequences and phenomena that derive from it.

“In this collaboration, we have been God’s instruments in the community, a factor of development, facilitation, growth, and revival.” Orthodox church partner from Albania

Georgian church partners pointed out the importance of partnering with World Vision to help children develop their cognitive abilities. The other positive side effect of activities with children was increased participation and engagement of their parents and caregivers. They shared their appreciation for the fact that World Vision listens to the community’s needs and involves them in the project from the initial phase so that they have a sense of ownership over implementation and results. They shared that World Vision consults with faith leaders, shapes joint activities in line with the community’s needs, and does not impose any project on the community.

World Vision has contributed to forming a healthy worldview in the faith community, and a relationship with God and the people around them. The partner also shared that the material problems children and families face are to some extent based on mental and intellectual issues, so support to vulnerable families has to be holistic, not only material or educational.

To overcome that, World Vision has helped the church empower young people mentally, changing their attitudes and approaches toward life.

“Only by faith, only by the love of God, only by the love of humans, we do everything. Without it, life becomes hell.” Partner from the Georgian Orthodox Church

Faith partners from JWG shared that World Vision drew parents closer to their children and equipped them with knowledge and skills to improve parent-child interaction through its engagement with Christian and Muslim faith partners.

Through joint activities, World Vision and faith partners strengthened the family’s role, equipped caregivers with positive disciplinary skills, and worked together to limit the toxic masculinity that limits women’s roles to reproductive work only.

Moreover, World Vision and faith leaders are supporting families to raise children in adapting to the new era of technologies and social media without losing the family’s primary role.

“Parents have a better connection with their feelings and emotions and are able to find solutions to different parenting and family issues.” Christian faith partner from Jerusalem West Bank Gaza (JWG)

“Celebrating Families has a huge impact on family union and awareness, and we wish to expand it to all our families in West Bank.” Muslim faith partner from JWG

A Muslim faith leader from JWG shared that children benefit from educational activities with parents. Parents who went through the workshops changed their parenting styles and became less violent. This resulted in parents now listening to their children and trying to understand their needs. This partner also mentioned that World Vision facilitators' excellent knowledge of Islam increased participating families' trust.

"The caregivers we targeted through our activities completely changed their behaviour and parenting style with their children and became less violent."  
Muslim faith partner from JWG

Faith partners also believe that World Vision is trusted because they comply with local laws and avoid interfering or taking sides in conflicts. All partners commended World Vision's transparency and investment in time and effort to follow all legal obligations and to carefully select staff.

"Every project we worked on with World Vision was designed from both parties for the benefit of our communities. World Vision does not impose any project on us. We work with them together while taking into consideration the community needs."  
Christian faith partner from JWG

"World Vision has an excellent reputation in our community and is known to have different activities targeting youth, children, and women, as well as humanitarian activities and behavioural change activities."  
Muslim faith partner from JWG

"Through World Vision we are now more open to addressing topics that were considered taboo before in our communities for long years although we know it exists like homosexuality."  
Christian faith partner from JWG

Partners from the Catholic Church and the Syriac Orthodox Church in Iraq have been partnering with World Vision Iraq for more than one year, but both shared that participating in these activities helped them raise awareness about child protection and parenting issues.

They also shared that World Vision helped the church deal with children in ways they either ignored or hadn't thought of before. They also shared that the role of faith is important in working with children, and World Vision should continue providing support in terms of education for partners, parents, and children, and helping communities better understand children's needs and be better equipped to provide family support.

"World Vision is a good organisation responding to the community needs without discrimination between beneficiaries. World Vision is a positive and flexible organisation."  
Partner from the Orthodox church in Iraq





## 5.6 Influence of Christian faith on World Vision's organisational culture, staff, and working environment

### 5.6.1 Christian identity as a driver of development and humanitarian work

All participating World Vision offices agreed that Christian identity is reflected through their work in serving the most vulnerable, without prejudice and discrimination. They said the organisation approaches all ethnic and religious groups equally and reflects God's love.

Most of the staff who participated in the research believe they understand World Vision's Christian identity and how it is reflected in their organisational culture, working environment, and external engagement. Still, many expressed the need for further capacity building on how to communicate externally and capture the role of faith in a way that conveys its entire essence and value.

World Vision Albania team shared the importance of continuous staff nurture, exemplary stewardship of all available resources, and openness to change and improvement. They also pointed out the importance of open and honest conversations and taking an approach that is not pushy but inspiring.

World Vision Georgia staff shared that the attitude, organisational culture, and love for people make World Vision different from other organisations, and that adds to the comparative advantage over other international NGOs in the country. Similarly, World Vision staff in JWG said that their Christian identity spurs them to live and work with the most vulnerable on the ground. It is the driver to saving lives and alleviating suffering, which provides a unique opportunity to work for lasting change that considers the entirety of a community's values and beliefs.



"Christianity to me as a World Vision employee means I serve people humbly and lovingly." JWG staff

JWG staff believe their goal is to reach people and serve the poor with the utmost compassion, but it also reminds them to work with people humbly and lovingly. Some staff stated that World Vision's Christian identity motivated them to stay in the organisation for many years.

World Vision Iraq staff believe that there are many different ways to express our Christian faith, but one of the most important ways is helping people in need and establishing good relationships with colleagues, beneficiaries, and partners.

Staff across offices also stated that they believe World Vision is more conscientious and sensitive, includes all faiths and confessions, constantly applies the do-not-harm principle, and respects the human dignity of all. Staff from the support functions claim that their motivation is slightly different due to the lack of direct contact with beneficiaries. Still, faith inspires them in everything they do and serves as a guideline for decision-making processes.



### 5.6.2 Christian identity in the workplace culture

World Vision Albania staff highlighted nurturing all World Vision values, including "We value people". This is reflected through a compassionate and loving attitude, mercy, and love for all, including colleagues, partners, and beneficiaries. Office culture nurtures a culture of dialogue and diversity of staff, as long as they respect the core values on which World Vision is built.

World Vision Georgia staff see Christian identity reflected in how the staff treats each other, listen to each other, and do things together and with love. Nurturing staff spirituality is seen as a continuous collaborative effort. While they believe that the strong bonds with the Georgian Orthodox Church are part of that identity, staff from other faiths are also part of the family and equally respected.

World Vision staff see Christian identity as not only rewarding but also a challenging part of work, as it implies constant efforts to sustain equality and equity in everything they do. Furthermore, transformational development starts with the staff and must be nurtured and reflected in all aspects of their community engagement.

World Vision JWG staff shared that they invest time in spiritual nurture in the office and that the World Vision Christian identity informs their work, engagement, behaviour, and mindsets. However, non-Christian staff, too, shared an instant connection when they first joined the office and many shared values that made it easy for them to blend in.

World Vision Iraq staff stated that staff care and organisational culture differentiate World Vision from other organisations. Staff shared that they engage with each other with empathy and go the extra mile to build relationships internally and externally.

All offices agreed that they are investing in building mutual respect and opening space for communication for all. This internal communication is reflected externally, and it helps World Vision build trust with new communities, as new communities tend to inquire about others' experiences before engaging with foreign NGOs.

### 5.6.3 Communicating Christian identity to beneficiaries and partners

World Vision Albania staff shared that beneficiaries in the field perceive World Vision staff differently from similar organisations and often express appreciation for working with World Vision. Beneficiaries recognise World Vision's Christian identity and often compare World Vision staff to good Samaritans.

"I feel proud because we are focused on community needs, respect diversity, and focus on World Vision's lasting impact."  
World Vision Albania staff

Albanian staff noted that while they always share that they are a Christian humanitarian organisation, they also carefully point out that World Vision works with families on developmental issues without any hidden agenda. They see faith as a precondition for a holistic approach and an indispensable part of their work. However, they still see difficulties in some donors being sceptical about World Vision and therefore opt for integrating F&D activities' outcomes rather than just the faith aspect per se. Partners and beneficiaries see that staff reflects Christian values and are eager to engage with World Vision and appreciate how World Vision engages externally in terms of transparency, consistency, joint planning, honouring agreements, etc.

World Vision Georgia staff highlighted the importance of partnering externally, especially with churches and their organisations at all levels. This is because, through cooperation with faith partners, F&D is being integrated into programming and implemented jointly in the field. This approach adds value to working with children, families, and communities, as churches are well respected and accepted by congregations, and working with them assures sustainability and the leveraging of positive results.

Staff across all offices agreed on the importance of communicating that World Vision is not proselytising, thus, being transparent about their agenda and holistic

approach to CWB, especially with new partners and in the areas with multi-ethnic and multi-religious populations, where our key messaging should capture our diversity and non-discrimination.

World Vision JWG sees their development identity shifting away from a focus on points of intra-faith difference to a growing recognition of shared values and growing trust in World Vision's declared intentions to be working for the good of all communities. Some staff stated that non-Christian people, individuals, and communities are initially reluctant to engage. However, trust develops fast once they get to work with World Vision and draw links between Christian values and the work that World Vision is doing in addressing poverty.

Building trust in communities is the best way to witness our Christian identity. The best evidence for that is our long presence in communities and great communication we have with them. We explain our identity; we state our goals, we inform them of our objective. Some people think we are missionaries, so we try to explain through our actions that we help children and improve their well-being." World Vision JWG staff

World Vision Iraq staff shared that all faith groups have welcomed and embraced World Vision, and they believe it is due to their open and transparent communication of the organisation's identity and mission, but, most importantly, sharing the message that World Vision serves all people without discrimination.

Communication with beneficiaries is sometimes complicated due to context sensitivities. However, World Vision's identity is expressed through the staff's actions and engagement with people in the field and by building confidence. All materials are carefully prepared to speak the language that resonates with beneficiaries, partners, and donors. Offices pointed out the importance of adhering to the host country's laws, regulations, and customs.

# 6. Recommendations

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## Recommendations for programming

01

Integrate F&D approaches and curricula across all sectors, especially in child protection, education and life skills, livelihoods, and health, for increased, sustainable impact.



02

Target vulnerable beneficiaries and households to build life skills through an integrated and multi-sectoral approach, so that families are provided with essential life support, as well as social norms transformation.

03

Provide positive parenting and resilience activities with faith-integrated approaches for caregivers to increase children's cognitive, educational, and social outcomes. Also focus on family relationships, mental health, and psycho-social support for both mothers and fathers.

04

Ensure that life skills interventions for adolescent girls and boys are consistent and long-term, instead of ad-hoc or one-time interventions.



05

Ensure proposed interventions and methodologies for adolescents and caregivers are gender-responsive and equally meaningful for both girls and boys. Ensure that women and men are also equally targeted for such activities.

06

Strategically plan for building the evidence of F&D intervention impacts and their contribution to CWBOs, as well as on the impact of partnering with faith partners.





07

Closely cooperate with core sectors for internal and external communication on the impact and contribution of F&D activities to overall CWB.

08

Leverage partnerships with faith leaders for their support and engagement in activities and advocacy due to their critical role in transforming social relationships at family and community levels.

09

Engage with faith partners from different faith communities and equip them with knowledge and skills to strengthen the family role and address and prevent domestic and child violence.

10

Continue working on spiritual formation with staff, building capacity for integrating F&D activities into projects to ensure behaviour change and social norm transformation in every project.

11

Intentionally share World Vision core policies and materials with all staff so they have a better understanding and are better able to articulate World Vision's Christian identity, the role, and value of F&D, and how it is reflected through the three segments of people, programmes, and partnerships.

12

Build on the added value of World Vision's Christian identity, and ensure that staff, partners, and beneficiaries understand and benefit from its impact.

## Recommendations for donors

01

Invest in life skills, adolescent empowerment, and positive parenting interventions that target the improvement of social and behavioural skills in children, as well as parents, along with family well-being and psycho-social support.

02

Ensure development and relief projects aim for positive behaviour change and social norms transformation, regardless of the core or leading sector.

03

Ensure local partnering is leveraged with community-based organisations, faith leaders, and community authorities, who are the gatekeepers of cultural norms and attitudes.





## 7. Conclusions

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This research **demonstrated the value and effectiveness of World Vision's F&D interventions** for girls and boys, women and men. In vulnerable communities where a significant proportion of the population is religious, World Vision is finding a common language and mutual grounding with children, parents, and faith leaders, as well as between different faith communities, for the common good and a brighter future for the next generation.

As the study shows, **World Vision expresses its faith identity through action** by providing life skills programmes with faith elements for adolescents, as an effective tool to empower them, build their capacity to make decisions, enable them to take actions that positively affect their lives, and promotes their psychological and physical well-being.

At the same time, parenting sessions with caregivers encourage positive parenting practices that promote a violence-free home environment, healthier family relationships, and increased well-being for children. World Vision's engagement with faith leaders contributes to **building trust in communities and ending violence against children**. It is also contributing to the capacity building of faith partners in social engagement, while, through transformational partnerships, World Vision incorporates their theological grounding, contributing to a holistic approach to CWB.

World Vision's core project models and approaches **help local people explore their faith values in a culturally appropriate manner to achieve tangible outcomes**. We do not seek to impose foreign values into a context. This approach may not always drive change, but this research shows examples of where it has worked and where it has not.

Recognising that **World Vision's Christian identity is inextricably entwined with its development and humanitarian actions** is critical. It creates unique pathways for social norms transformation and behavioural change for the well-being of vulnerable children, their families, and communities.