

CAPACITY STATEMENT CHILD PROTECTION

Context

Children and women make up about 50% of the Somali population, but they face various challenges that impact their well-being, including harmful traditional practices such as Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), child marriage, child labour and violence. 34 per cent of girls are married off before their 18th birthday while 16 per cent are married before the age of 15. In Somalia, 98 per cent of girls and women aged 15-49 have undergone Female Genital Mutilation/Circumcision (FGM/C)¹.

Children who experience abuse and violence are often left with long-lasting negative social, emotional, mental and physical consequences. Children with disabilities also suffer disproportionately, and are more likely to be neglected or physically, emotionally, and sexually abused. Emergencies and conflict situations exacerbate or create new child protection concerns.

Also, of particular concern are heightened protection risks faced by children who have fled violence and are living in makeshift settlements with limited access to essential services, including protection.

The Solution

World Vision collaborates with like-minded stakeholders to enhance child protection outcomes, ensuring the safeguarding of children from abuse, neglect, exploitation, harmful practices, and various forms of violence. We use a systems approach to address the underlying causes of violence against both girls and boys, through empowering key stakeholders to work together to strengthen a protective environment that cares for and supports children.

In our commitment to bolster the protection of girls and women, we provide frontline workers with comprehensive training in Gender-Based Violence (GBV) prevention, alongside conducting awareness campaigns focused on GBV. Our dedicated teams also provide psychosocial and livelihood support to survivors of GBV.

World Vision works on addressing child protection, parenting, and child abuse issues in across Somalia and Somaliland. We do this through different approaches. They encompass Learning Through Play, Basic Education Improvement Plan (BEIP) School Feeding, Child Protection & Advocacy (CP&A), and Community-Change initiatives.

World Vision's Child Protection approaches:



1. Child Protection and Advocacy:

This focuses on strengthening the child protection system at the community level, thus empowering communities and local partners to strengthen the protection of children from abuse, neglect, exploitation and other forms of violence. It aims to create a safer environment for children.



2. Channels of Hope (CoH):

This is a World Vision approach that motivates and equips faith leaders and communities to engage with key child well-being issues. Faith leaders are often influential in the community and are a key partner in our efforts to end all forms of violence against children and ensure their rights are protected and promoted; their interpretation and the resulting application of religious texts shapes male and female relationships. In some instances, religious text has been used to validate cultural practices that keep women on the fringes of processes that are critical to their development, and to that of their families and communities. This can result in a lack of equitable access and control of family and community resources, as well as gender-based violence. This power imbalance negatively impacts on the well-being of women and girls and the development potential of entire communities. But when faith leaders promote principles of equality, and the shared access and utilisation of family and community resources, this contributes to harmonious relationships within families, faith groups and communities. We've trained faith leaders and equipped them with knowledge and information on meaningful ways to address violence in the community.

¹ <https://www.unicef.org/somalia/press-releases/fifth-anniversary-somalias-ratification-convention-rights-child-approaches>.



3. Community Change for Social Action:

This is done through inter-personal dialogue by which communities explore in depth the underlying beliefs, socio-cultural norms and traditional practices that either challenge or support their progress towards improving the well-being of children.

Through this community members are empowered to come up with their own solutions and plans for social change.

Quick highlights of what we were able to achieve in 2023



235,000 people reached with child protection activities including messaging on preventing violence and harmful practices to all project participants.



Procured and distributed Post-Exposure Prophylaxis (PEP) to care for survivors of Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV).



Equipped **47** children with disabilities with essential mobility aids, including wheelchairs, crutches, and other assistive devices.



1,300 children supported through our Child Friendly Spaces (in the CFS, children participate in play activities, reading, writing and spelling) and receive a day meal.



Disseminated **2,885** posters advocating for referral pathways, accountability mechanisms, and messages focused on preventing Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and promoting protection.



Facilitated corrective surgery and comprehensive treatment for **37** female survivors of fistula complications, aiding in their recovery and rehabilitation.



Provided support and care for **1,000** Unaccompanied and Separated Children (UASC).



Enhanced safety measures for girls and women by installing solar-powered street lighting across **12** internally displaced persons camps.



Empowered **5,400** members of the Child Protection Committee with training in safeguarding children, including prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse, Disability inclusion, Clinical Management of Rape, and integration of protection measures.



Provided essential support, including distribution of dignity kits, psychosocial support, and in some cases clinical management of rape to **270** women vulnerable to rape and violence.



Distributed **700** handheld solar lamps to individuals residing in internally displaced persons camps, ensuring access to sustainable lighting solutions.

A huge thank you to our Donors and Partners



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