



**WORLD VISION  
CHRISTIAN  
WITNESS  
MESSAGING**



## INTRODUCTION



## Letter from the president

Dear World Vision colleague,

At World Vision, we believe fullness of life is God's vision for every child, and bearing witness to Jesus Christ is central to how we pursue this vision. We know the Miracle Worker is active through our humble yet bold witness and is changing lives for good. Praise God!

As you know, we work in diverse religious contexts around the globe. How we bear witness to the kingdom of God is very different in Christian-majority contexts than it is in a religiously restricted context. This Christian Witness Messaging Guide is designed to help you understand and communicate our witness in the various contexts in which we serve.

Please use this information with current and future donors and partners for whom our witness to Christ is a foundational reason to partner with us. **Any text in red is particularly sensitive and should be shared with extreme care, as it could endanger our staff and presence in restricted contexts.** Any text in black can be freely used to help explain our work around the world.

Grateful for you and your partnership in the gospel,



Edgar Sandoval Sr.  
President and CEO  
World Vision



1 OVERVIEW

2 OUR BASIS

3 THE CHALLENGE

4 OUR RESPONSE

5 FRAMEWORK

**“You will be my witnesses.” —Jesus (Acts 1:8)**

**Intent:** We witness to what we have seen, heard, and experienced in Christ (1 John 1:3).

**Approach:** We do this through life, deed, word, and sign (1 Peter 3:15).



LIFE



DEED



WORD



SIGN

**Outcome:** Those we serve are encouraged to respond to the gospel of Jesus Christ.

We recognize that every life transformed in Christ is ultimately a result of the work of the Holy Spirit (John 16:7–9; Acts 10:44–47).

*Our mission statement affirms that we “witness to the good news of the kingdom of God . . . and witness to Jesus Christ by life, deed, word, and sign that encourages people to respond to the gospel.”*

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## World Vision's witness to Jesus Christ

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**WHY** It's our vision: life in all its fullness. We believe that the good news of Jesus Christ is His offer of eternal life in the kingdom of God through His death and resurrection, and that He intends fullness of life for each person not only in heaven but also here on earth (John 10:10). We believe that poverty is both physical and spiritual, and that it is rooted in broken relationships with God, self, others, and the rest of creation. Fullness of life is not possible when such broken relationships and damaged self-worth exist. These broken relationships are often caused by mindsets rooted in arrogance, selfishness, and hatred—and/or hopelessness, fear, and ignorance. These attitudes can lead to injustice, violence, marginalization, and passivity. Restoration of broken relationships is integral to the gospel of Jesus Christ (Matthew 5:23–24). Bearing witness to the gospel is also an expression of our obedience to the biblical call to love God, love our neighbors, and make disciples (Matthew 22:37–40; 28:19–20). Showing people the love of Christ draws them to the cross of Christ.

**HOW** We desire to witness to the gospel message of restoration in the kingdom of God through our ministry to partners, supporters, and the children and families we serve. We do this through life, deed, word, and sign. We seek to see God restore broken relationships as we take up the ministry of reconciliation (2 Corinthians 5:17–20). We strive to create mutually transforming connections that meet physical and spiritual needs wherever they exist. We desire that all people respond to the good news and grow in their faith in Jesus Christ, but we never require that people hear a gospel message as a condition for receiving help.

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As we've experienced for ourselves, fullness of life is not possible where broken relationships and damaged self-worth have led to physical and spiritual poverty. We were created to glorify God, reflect His image, love one another, and steward creation (Psalm 145:1–12, Genesis 1:26–27, John 15:12, Psalm 8:6–8). But sin has corrupted what God originally created as good (Romans 1:20–25).

**We believe that the world's most vulnerable children—those living in extreme poverty or the toughest places—disproportionately bear the brunt of broken relationships and evil.**

In many countries where World Vision serves, barriers such as lack of opportunity, dependency, and fragility of governance limit people's ability to envision—and work toward—restored relationships and success in breaking the generational cycle of poverty.

All people, regardless of the context in which they were born, deserve the chance to know the love of God, learn about Jesus' offer of salvation, and experience fullness of life in God's kingdom.

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## World Vision's witness to Jesus Christ

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Driven by this belief, World Vision chooses to work in ALL contexts—not only in contexts where Christianity is welcomed (Christian-majority and Christian-minority contexts) but ALSO where it is not (restricted contexts). In Christian-majority contexts, we openly share the gospel and do Christian discipleship work. In restricted contexts, we adapt our witness, carefully observing the laws of our host country. See pages 12–13 to read more about how we represent the love of Christ in these contexts (1 Corinthians 9:19–23).\* It is our prayer that all people would experience healing from broken relationships, restoration of their identity in Christ, and movement toward a personal and ever-growing relationship with Jesus.

**We witness through:****LIFE**

*Living and working in such a way that when people ask questions about our motivations or lifestyle, Jesus' love and mercy is the answer (1 Peter 3:15)*

**DEED**

*Acts of service through our best-in-class programs that focus on emergency response, clean water, food security, education, economic empowerment, and more*

**WORD**

*Our life testimonies, responding to questions, sharing the gospel and biblical truths where possible, and partnerships with churches and other ministries*

**SIGN**

*Praying and expecting answers to prayer, and pointing to God's miraculous provision (Romans 15:18–19)*

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INTRODUCTION



# World Vision's witness to Jesus Christ

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For those living in material and spiritual poverty ...  
our vision is **life in all its fullness\*** both here on earth and in eternity.

We serve people living in three different faith contexts:



**1 Christian-majority**  
Mostly Christians



**2 Christian-minority**  
Combination of non-Christians and Christians



**3 Restricted**  
People with little to no awareness of the gospel

We bear witness to the good news of the gospel through **LIFE**, **DEED**, **WORD** and **SIGN** tailored to the faith background of those in each context.

*See page 14 for descriptions of our biblically based programs.*

**Examples of our impact:**

- In 2023, we helped **over 2.6 million interested youth and children** begin a relationship with Jesus or grow in their faith through our Christian discipleship, spiritual nurture, and faith-based programs, all of which are built on biblical principles.
- In partnership with other organizations, in 2023 World Vision facilitated access to **40,000 Bibles or New Testaments** for those who desire to grow in their Christian faith.
- Since 2015, World Vision has annually equipped **more than 50,000 pastors and church leaders**.

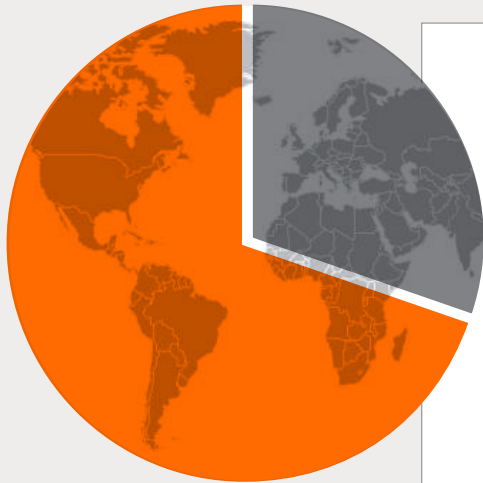
We work in the world's toughest places—including more than 25 of the 50 countries where it's hardest to follow Jesus.

*\*John 10:10*

FRAMEWORK



# Witnessing in Christian-majority contexts



In over 60% of the countries in which we work around the world, we're able to openly bear witness to the good news of Jesus Christ. We witness to those we serve in these contexts through life, deed, word, and sign. We partner with local churches and ministry organizations, knowing that together we can achieve greater impact for God's kingdom.

### Examples of Christian-majority contexts:

- > Guatemala
- > Kenya
- > Mexico
- > The Philippines
- > The United States
- > Zambia

*A full list of countries is available upon request.*

### The situation:

- > Parents often follow cultural norms that can be destructive to a child's well-being
- > Bibles in the local language and biblical training can be hard to come by
- > Pastors and teachers may not receive training in how to minister to children
- > Youth ministries of any kind can be scarce

### Our approach:

- > Providing biblically based training for parents on healthy family relationships
- > Distributing Bibles to those who request them
- > Training pastors in ministering to those in their care
- > Equipping teachers with biblical resources to support children



**LIFE**



**DEED**



**WORD**



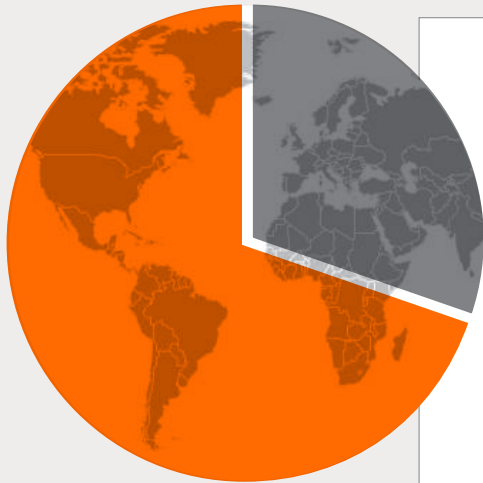
**SIGN**



FRAMEWORK



# Witnessing in Christian-majority contexts



LIFE



DEED



WORD



SIGN

### Examples of ministry partners:

- > Local churches
- > Awana
- > Bible societies
- > Child Evangelism Fellowship
- > National denominational networks
- > Young Life
- > Youth for Christ

### Examples of Christian discipleship programs:

- > After-school and teen clubs
- > Bible clubs
- > Biblical Empowered Worldview curriculum
- > Let the Children Come curriculum
- > Sunday school
- > Vacation Bible School and summer camps

*See page 14 for more information on our programs.*

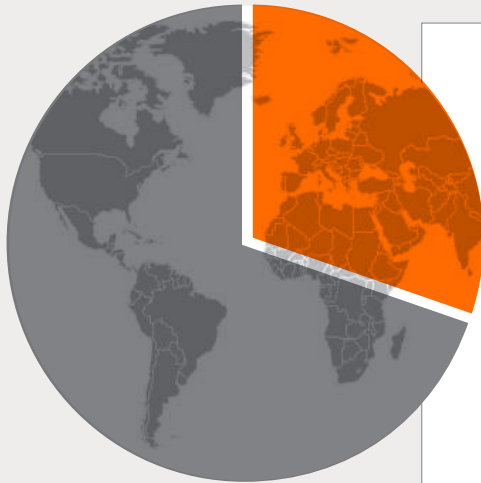
### Examples of our impact:

- > In 2023, we helped **over 2.6 million interested youth and children** begin a relationship with Jesus or grow in their faith through our Christian discipleship, spiritual nurture, and faith-based programs, all of which are built on biblical principles.
- > Since 2015, World Vision has annually equipped **more than 13,000 churches in nearly 60 countries.**
- > In partnership with Biblica, Tyndale, One Hope, and local Bible societies, World Vision facilitates access to **at least 40,000 Bibles or New Testaments a year** for those who desire to grow in their Christian faith. Since 2016, **over 1.6 million people** have benefited from Bibles provided through World Vision.

FRAMEWORK



# Witnessing in Christian-minority contexts



**In about a third of the countries where we work**, Christianity is not the most prevalent religion or is one among many practiced. Like the apostle Paul in Athens (see Acts 17:16–34), our witness to Christ in these contexts is done through a thoughtful combination of life, deed, word, and sign. This is often in partnership with local church and ministry organizations. Our prayer is that children will grow in their awareness and knowledge of God’s love and a relationship with Jesus.

Our biblically based approaches help people address the broken relationships that keep them trapped in a cycle of physical poverty, spiritual poverty, or both. We celebrate the local church’s role in sustaining spiritual and social transformation long after we’ve left a community.

### Examples of Christian-minority contexts:

- › Albania
- › Bangladesh
- › Cambodia
- › Niger
- › Sudan
- › Syria

*A full list of countries is available upon request.*

### The situation:

- › Parents often follow cultural norms that can be destructive to a child’s well-being
- › Christians and church leaders can face persecution and government oversight
- › Pastors and teachers have scarce resources and must earn credibility and acceptance
- › Bibles in the local language and biblical training are hard to come by

### Our approach:

- › Providing biblically based training for parents on healthy family relationships
- › Distributing Bibles to those who request them
- › Training pastors in ministering to those in their care
- › Where appropriate, equipping teachers with biblical resources to support children



LIFE



DEED



WORD

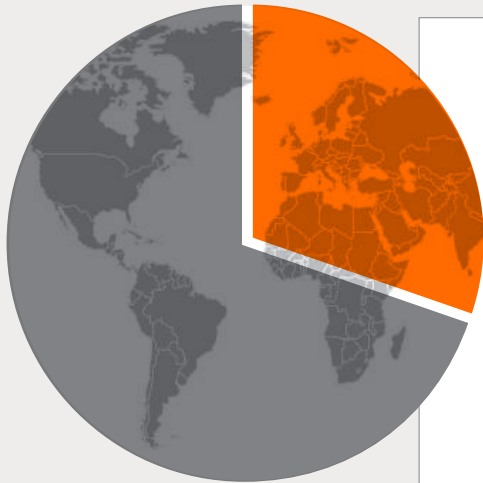


SIGN

FRAMEWORK



# Witnessing in Christian-minority contexts



LIFE



DEED



WORD



SIGN

### Examples of ministry partners:

- > Local churches
- > Alpha
- > Bible societies
- > Campus Crusade for Christ
- > National denominational networks
- > One Hope
- > Scripture Union

### Examples of biblically based programs:

- > Biblical Empowered Worldview
- > Celebrating Families
- > Channels of Hope
- > Pastor trainings

*See page 14 for more information on our programs.*

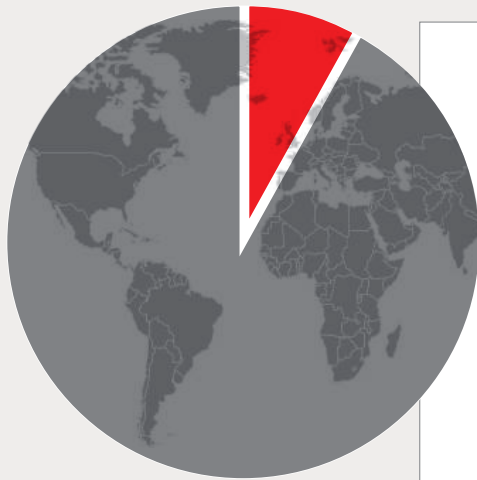
### Examples of our impact:

- > Since 2015, World Vision has annually equipped **more than 50,000 pastors, priests, youth workers, and other Christian faith leaders**, many of whom are associated with the churches we support.
- > In 2023, **nearly 8 million people** participated in or benefited from our Christian discipleship or biblically based programs.

FRAMEWORK



# Witnessing in restricted contexts



**In about 10% of the contexts in which we work**, a public witness to the good news of Christ is against the law or politically sensitive. Very few Christian organizations operate in these contexts.

We consider it an honor to represent the love of Christ to everyone through our Christian identity and presence (life, deed, and pointing to God’s signs). **Our witness in these contexts happens in the safety of trusted relationships built over time. We are always ready to answer questions when they arise about the reason for the hope that we have. We respect local laws and do not endanger our staff, partners, or the children and families we serve.**

In restricted contexts, we work with “gentleness and respect” as 1 Peter 3:15 guides believers to do among all people. We seek to find common values and don’t waver from our biblical beliefs. We collaborate with leaders of different faiths but never use our resources to promote other religions.



**LIFE**



**DEED**



**WORD**



**SIGN**

**The situation:**

- It’s against the law or culturally forbidden to proclaim the gospel through word and to distribute Bibles
- Opposition to the gospel often comes from those in power, not from people living in poverty
- Over 40% of the world’s population has never heard the good news of Jesus<sup>1</sup>

**Our approach:**

- We shine the light of Christ through acts of love and lives of character, provoking the question to which Jesus is the answer (Matthew 5:16, 1 Peter 3:15). Our approach includes:
- Teaching biblical principles and values through programs
  - Training pastors where churches exist
  - Partnering with churches and other Christian ministries where they exist
  - **Witnessing informally in the safety of trusted relationships**

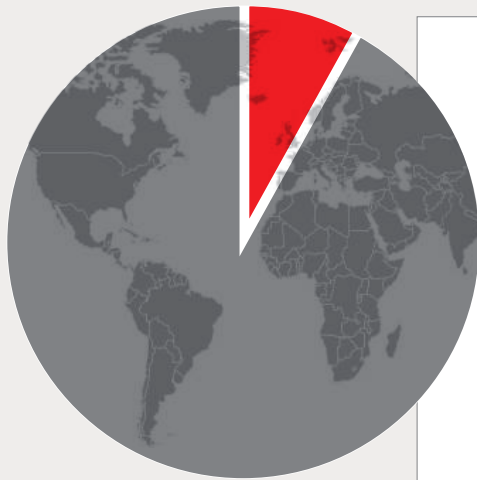
<sup>1</sup> [joshuaproject.net/people\\_groups/statistics](http://joshuaproject.net/people_groups/statistics)

Reminder: Content in red should never be shared externally in writing.

FRAMEWORK



# Witnessing in restricted contexts



**A list of restricted-context countries is available upon request.**

**Examples of biblically based programs:**

- > Biblical Empowered Worldview
- > Celebrating Families
- > Channels of Hope
- > Pastor trainings

*These programs are sensitively adapted to the local context. See page 14 for more information on our programs.*



LIFE



DEED



WORD



SIGN

**Examples of our impact:**

- > We work in the most challenging places—including **28 of the 50 countries where it's hardest to follow Jesus**<sup>1</sup>—because we believe that God loves all people, is already at work everywhere, and wants every child to experience the fullness of life Jesus offers.
- > World Vision shows God's love in some of the world's toughest places through our Christian identity and presence in **40 countries listed as "fragile contexts" or violence-affected**, and in **12 classified as "extremely fragile,"**<sup>2</sup> where extreme poverty has a firm grip.

<sup>1</sup> Open Doors' 2024 World Watch List

<sup>2</sup> Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, States of Fragility, September 2022

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FRAMEWORK



Our biblically based programs

World Vision’s biblically based programs\* mobilize local pastors, faith leaders, parents, and caregivers to apply scriptural truths to the key issues their communities face regarding marriage, health, economic empowerment, gender equality, and child protection.

**Biblical Empowered Worldview**

- Biblically based
- Integrates scripture
- Appropriate for **90%** of contexts where we work

Helps people restore their true **identity in Christ**, recognize their God-given value, and use their talents and resources to change their own lives.

**Celebrating Families**

- Biblically based
- Integrates scripture
- Appropriate for **90%** of contexts where we work

Helps parents and caregivers learn how to be **loving spouses** and contributors to their **children’s faith and spiritual development**.

**Channels of Hope**

- Biblically based
- Integrates scripture
- Appropriate for **90%** of contexts where we work

Engages and equips faith leaders to tackle specific issues in their community that affect child well-being, such as **child protection, gender equality, and health**.

**Let the Children Come**

- Biblically based
- Integrates scripture
- Appropriate for **60%** of contexts where we work

Increases children’s awareness and experience of God’s love through access to age-appropriate and context-sensitive Christian programs, materials, and messages; equips parents and caregivers to provide **loving homes and nurturing support**; and mobilizes church leaders to **shepherd children’s faith** in Jesus.

This is implemented most often in Christian-majority contexts and includes rigorous evidence-building and evaluation in partnership with Baylor University and Fuller Seminary.

How we adapt **Biblical Empowered Worldview, Celebrating Families**, and **Channels of Hope** to **non-Christian** and **restricted contexts**:

- Address spiritual root causes
- Leverage common religious and local cultural values
- Use biblical principles
- Engage local faith leaders to champion programs

The above adaptations make these three programs appropriate for and highly effective in **RESTRICTED** contexts where we work. **But our most impactful witness in these contexts comes through our staff’s own lives, God’s miraculous actions, and our staff’s testimonies shared in the safety of trusted relationships developed over time.**

\*For a fuller description of these programs, please contact Cherry Marcelo ([cmarcelo@worldvision.org](mailto:cmarcelo@worldvision.org)) with World Vision’s Faith and Development team in the U.S.

FRAMEWORK



Stories of impact

**Christian discipleship**  
*(Christian-majority)*



**ZAMBIA**

In **Zambia**, millions of people have no choice but to live with contaminated water. Water provides an ideal way for World Vision staff to bear witness to our faith. It opens doors to talk with community members about good health and Christ’s character by using our biblical curriculum, Jesus: The Source of Living Water.

**Spiritual nurture**  
*(Christian-minority)*



**BANGLADESH**

In **Bangladesh**, we’re equipping faith leaders to become stronger advocates for kids. Through working with Muslim faith leaders, we’ve helped prevent child marriages, secure the release of child laborers, and ensure birth registration for children who would otherwise lack a legal identity.

**Christian presence**  
*(Restricted)*

**RESTRICTED COUNTRY\***

In this country, the Living Values Development curriculum helps children understand how values such as honesty, humility, and responsibility can be expressed through attitudes and behaviors. This training for children and youth is paired with Celebrating Families workshops to help moms and dads learn positive parenting techniques. Because the government has seen the positive impact of this training on family relationships and child protection, they have allowed its use in communities.

\*Details are actual for a specific country; name has been redacted and is available upon request

## CONCLUSION



**“You will be my witnesses.” (Acts 1:8)**



**We are witnesses to God’s work of restoring broken relationships around the world and the fulfillment of Jesus’ promise of fullness of life as people respond to the gospel. This promise is for everyone: supporters, partners, and the most vulnerable children and families in the world’s toughest places.**