



3rd Impact Report



Contents

5	Editorial
6	Chapter 1: Our vision: Sustainable well-being for all children worldwide
8	Chapter 2: How we work
12	Chapter 3: Impact monitoring at World Vision
20	Chapter 4: What has been happening? Recommendations from the 2nd impact report
22	Chapter 5: Focus on sustainability – evaluations from six projects
64	Chapter 6: Online survey: What are employees at World Vision saying about sustainability?
68	Chapter 7: “Unlock Literacy” – Children learn to read
76	Chapter 8: Assessment of the quality of evaluations executed by CEval since 2014 – are there any trends?
80	Glossary
82	End notes

Imprint

Gender equality is of great importance for World Vision. We have therefore endeavored to employ gender-neutral wording in all articles in this publication. If we have not managed this at any point, the text should nonetheless be understood to be inclusive of all genders.

You can find additional material for the 3rd impact report at worldvision.de/3.Wirkungsbericht.

Publisher: World Vision Deutschland e.V.

Responsibility: Christoph Waffenschmidt, Christoph Hilligen, Martin van de Locht, Stefan Sengstmann

Conceptual design: Thorsten Bär, Naëmi Heimerdinger, Saron Dawit

Editors: Thorsten Bär, Verena Bloch, Saron Dawit, Dr. Thomas Döhne, Naëmi Heimerdinger, Cedric Vogel

Design: Daniel Kaspar

Diagrams: Daniel Kaspar, Nicola Witbooi (impact illustrations)

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Editorial

Dear Readers,

What remains at the end of a project? What success was achieved? Can we report back to our sponsors in detail on this? These are the questions we asked ourselves as part of the 2nd impact report, and which led to the idea of analyzing the topic of the **sustainability of impacts** in the 3rd impact report.

The impact report, and in particular the analysis of the evaluation reports and project documents, has become a source of important learning experiences for us at World Vision Germany. In the daily routine of work, individual evaluation reports and their recommendations are quickly put to one side. But grouping the results in a single publication helps us to draw attention to important aspects in a targeted manner.

As in the first two impact reports, in this 3rd impact report we would like to explain our **understanding of impact** (chapter 3) and reflect on **recommendations from the previous report** (chapter 4).

In the main section of the report we analyze the **sustainability of impacts** (chapter 5). At the beginning of the chapter we explain which factors have an influence on the sustainability of impacts. We then address **six evaluations carried out in 2019**, in which we turned to face the topic of sustainability more strongly. Using different initial situations, we would like to place a greater focus on each of the claims and expectations associated with sustainability. Alongside the geographical regions and circumstances in which the projects are carried out, we are also interested in looking at the role played by each phase of the project in the evaluation of the sustainability of impacts. What needs to be taken into consideration at the start of a project to facilitate sustainability (interim evaluation)? How likely is it that there are long-term impacts at the end of the project (end evaluation)? What has remained of our work several years after a project has finished (ex-post)?

We were also interested in hearing what the local persons in charge of the projects had to say. In this way, the chapter on sustainability is **expanded with an online survey, where we pose the question to project managers** (chapter 6) as well as the leader of a **local organization in Mauritania** (chapter 5) of how sustainable their work is.

You can find a detailed example of an **evaluation with a quasi-experimental research design** on the topic of reading comprehension in chapter 7.

At the end of the impact report there is a **trend analysis to summarize the three meta evaluations carried out by the Center for Evaluation (CEval)**. Are there any trends in terms of methodical quality of evaluations in the timeframe from 2012 to 2017?

You can find additional material for the 3rd impact report at worldvision.de/3.Wirkungsbericht.

We hope that our self-critical and transparent approach to this report increases the trust placed in our work. The success of our work would not be possible without the support of our sponsors and donors. We would like to offer you our heartfelt thanks for your support and the trust you place in us!

Martin van de Locht
Senior Director, International Program Department



Chapter 1:

Our vision:

Sustainable well-being for all children worldwide

World Vision is an international, non-denominational Christian children's charity organization. Our goal is to provide a better future for those children, their families and their surroundings who are most in need of help. This is done through sustainable development cooperation, humanitarian aid and political advocacy work.

World Vision Germany is part of the global World Vision partnership which in 2018 was active in 100 countries. That year, World Vision Germany supported 284 projects in 48 countries.¹

Our contribution to the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals

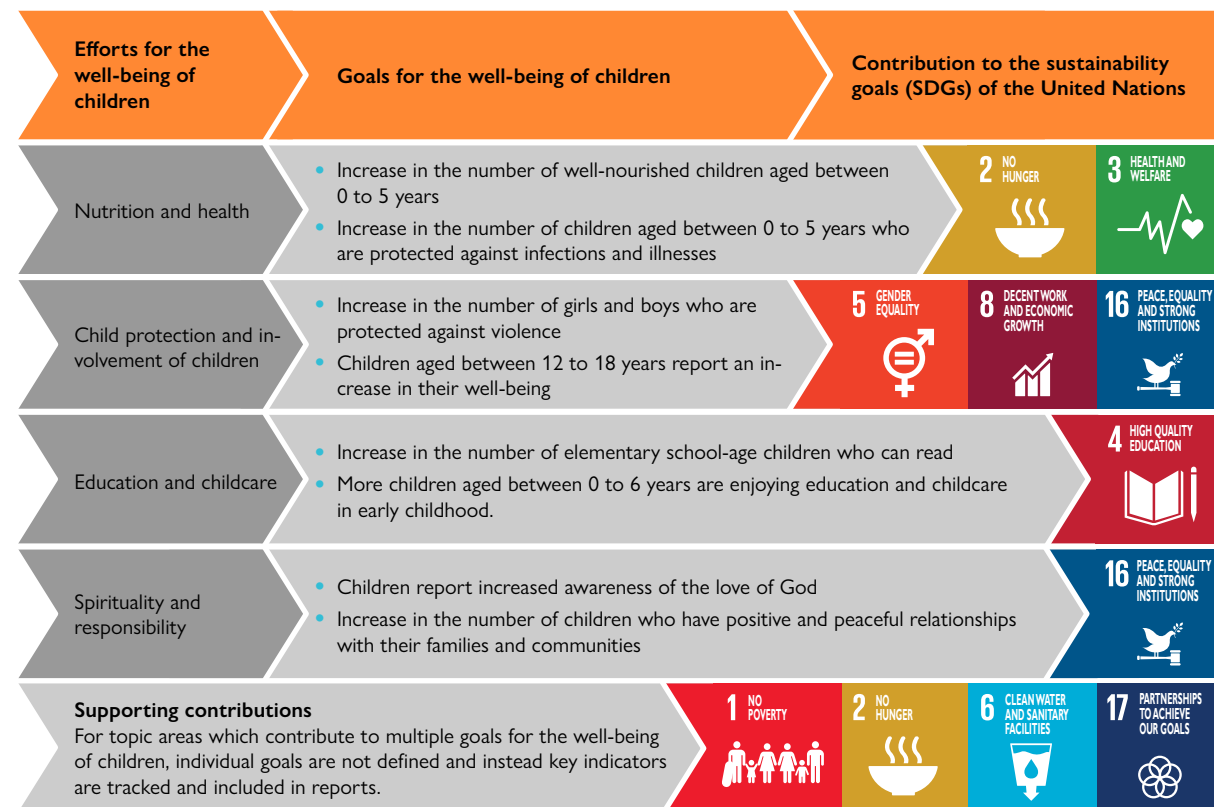
The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the United Nations came into effect in 2016. The world community has committed itself to achieving the 17 development goals agreed therein by 2030. With the "Our Promise 2030" strategy, the World Vision partnership pledges its commitment to these sustainability

goals. As part of our work, we want to create sustainable future opportunities for children. For this, we are concentrating in particular on the sectors of health and nutrition, child protection, education and training, agriculture and economic development (livelihood) as well as water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) in our project work.

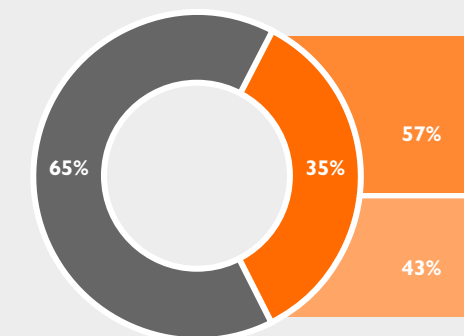
The following illustration shows the work areas of World Vision and our goals and how our work contributes to achieving the relevant SDGs.

Our goals

For each of the five sectors of our work, we have developed project approaches (see chapter 2). The World Vision partnership has set a total of eight goals, which the project activities aim to achieve. The goals at the level of society are, for example, the social, economic and political inclusion of minorities and people with disabilities, ending extreme poverty, as well as developing the capacities of relevant stakeholders



Comparison of SDG indicators and World Vision standard indicators



- SDG indicators **with** reference to WV topics
- Correspondence with WV standard indicators
- Thematic connection but no specific WV standard indicators available
- SDG indicators **without** reference to WV topics

both from governmental (local councils and ministries) and non-governmental parties (local organizations and stakeholders). Goals relating specifically to children are, among others, that all children and families have access to secure and healthy food sources and that all children attending elementary school can read and do math. The eight goals of the World Vision partnership are in line with the SDGs and contribute directly to the eleven SDGs from the United Nations as shown in the illustration. This strategic framework enables us to ensure that our work is consistent with international efforts and provides a contribution to sustainable development.

SDG indicators and World Vision standard indicators

Indicators have been developed for the SDGs in order to check if the goals have been reached. The World

Vision partnership has carried out comparisons to see how much the standard indicators² recommended in the various sectors correspond to the indicators of the SDGs. With this, we were able to evaluate the conformity of our strategic focus with the development goals of the United Nations.

Out of a total of 232 SDG indicators³, we classified 84 – a good third – as being very closely related to our work in terms of content, and therefore relevant for us. 47 of these SDG indicators identified as being relevant to our work correspond to the World Vision standard indicators. For the remaining 37 SDG indicators there is a thematic connection, but there are no specific WV indicators available. Overall, we can say that our organizational work matches the SDGs to great extent in relevant areas, meaning that we are able to provide a contribution to achieving the SDGs.



Chapter 2: How we work

The sustained well-being of children is the primary goal of our work. In order to achieve this goal, World Vision's project work is carried out not only directly with the children themselves, but also with the aim of realizing long-lasting positive impacts in their social environment (see illustration below). World Vision's approach is based on three levels: from the individual level of the child, to their direct social environment such as the family or village community and their extended local and national surroundings. Local government authorities, organizations and other stakeholders are among the other environmental factors which have an influence on children. The children whose well-being we want to improve socialize in these complex surroundings and are shaped by them, which is why a one-sided focus on the individual level will not bring about sustainable impacts; there must also be positive changes taking place in the other environmental factors of the children.

To achieve our goals for the well-being of children, World Vision is working in five sectors:

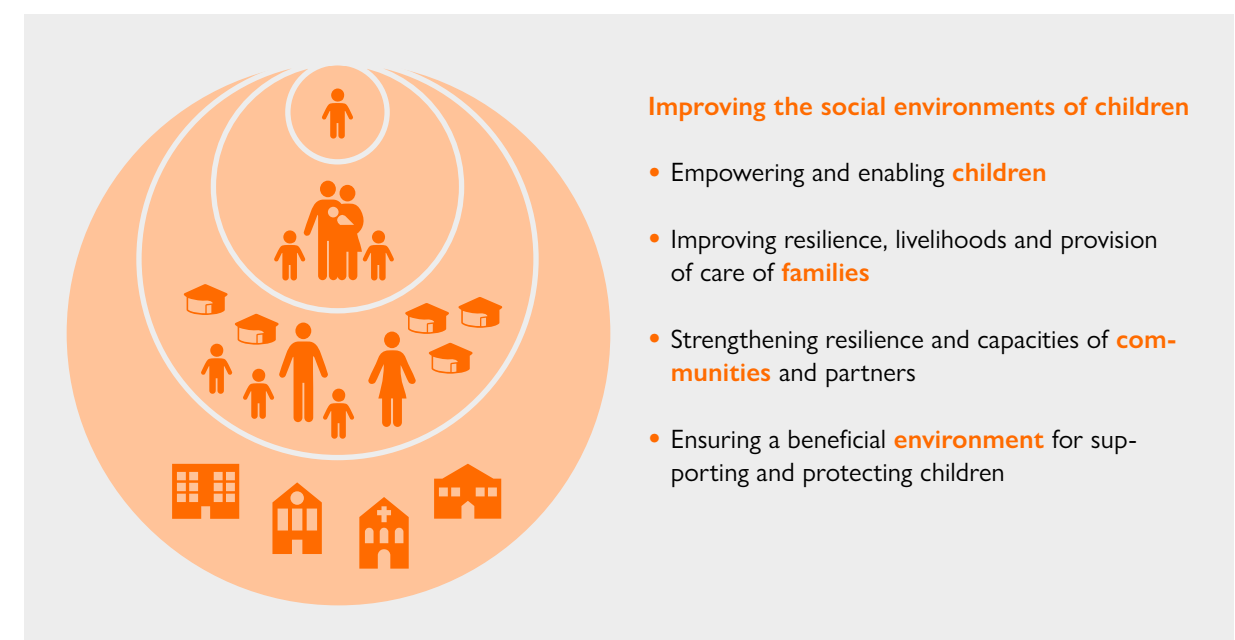
- Child Protection
- Education and training
- Water, sanitation and hygiene
- Health and nutrition
- Agriculture and economic development

For each of these sectors, World Vision has selected and further developed a variety of systematic approaches which have proved successful in international development cooperation and humanitarian aid projects.

Last year, World Vision analyzed the extent to which the effectiveness and impact of the sector approaches employed was scientifically proven (you can find out more about our project approaches at worldvision.de/projektansaetze). For most of the approaches there is sufficient evidence available, but for some there are still a few questions. We aim to fill these gaps in our knowledge in the next few years through global impact studies.

These approaches show how targeted measures can achieve impacts in project regions in the short-term, medium-term and long-term. The different sector approaches can be adapted and are suitable to be used as effective responses to specific, context-related needs and challenges in close cooperation with local organizations and stakeholders.

The approaches represent a type of guidelines which are intended to provide project staff with tools and support in different project phases for every sector – from the analysis of the context and needs to the



planning phase and quality criteria for implementation. Depending on the context, it may be that only certain aspects of an approach are relevant within a project.

Fragile contexts

In recent years, the focus of World Vision’s work has increasingly shifted to fragile contexts. Some project approaches were gradually adapted for fragile contexts, such as the “Education in Crises” approach. The illustration below shows an overview of our approaches.

Overview of our approaches

- Education in crises
- Citizen Voice and Action
- Community management of acute malnutrition
- Community health workers
- Health committees
- Go Baby Go!
- Channels of hope
- Child protection and advocacy

- Development cooperation
- Humanitarian aid
- Work in fragile contexts
- Child-friendly spaces
- Learning Roots
- Reading camps
- Positive Deviance/Hearth
- Establishing secure livelihoods
- Savings groups and micro-credits
- Ultra-Poor Graduation
- Water, sanitation and hygiene

training is devised based on these practices. A mother who has received this training can then give families with malnourished children more understanding of these positive nutritional practices at meetings. At these meetings, parents are also informed about further topics such as hygiene, health and breast-feeding. Local coordinators meet regularly with these groups of mothers to help strengthen their organizational abilities. The “Positive Deviance/Hearth” approach is generally used in combination with other approaches with the aim of achieving more sustainable impacts on the health of children.

In the following we will present two examples of our sector approaches: “Positive Deviance/Hearth” in the nutrition sector and “Citizen Voice and Action” in the sector of local advocacy work.

“Positive Deviance/Hearth” – a good example of nutrition for families

In regions where many children are malnourished, one of World Vision’s approaches is the use of “Positive Deviance/Hearth” to help underweight children regain weight. This approach enables families and those responsible in the villages themselves to develop and apply solutions to combat malnutrition among children. The World Vision partnership has been using this approach since as early as 1999, firstly in Latin America and nowadays in more than 30 countries.

The term “Positive Deviance” refers to the parents of a region who feed their children sufficiently and with a balanced diet, despite the scarcity of food. Their behavior is examined in terms of positive examples that serve as role models for other families with the aim of understanding what these “positively deviating families” do differently to parents of malnourished children. In this approach, the practices of families without malnourished children are identified and

“Citizen Voice and Action” is making governments wake up to their sense of responsibility

“Citizen Voice and Action” (CVA) informs citizens of their rights and enables them to protect and claim these rights. Villagers can therefore independently demand that their governments fulfill their promises and duties. In 2019, the World Vision partnership implemented the CVA approach in more than 40 countries and over 700 projects.

Training sessions are used in our projects to inform people about their rights and the duties of their government, especially on a local level. They then work together with local authorities and civil organizations to align their current situation with the planned services from the government. Informed citizens are given the opportunity to evaluate the government’s services independently and using their own criteria. They also work with other stakeholders to influence decision-makers and improve the quality of state services with advocacy work. Our aim for the long-term is that villagers can stand up for their own rights and achieve changes without being dependent on the help of project leaders.





Chapter 3:

Impact monitoring at World Vision

In this chapter we will present our understanding of the impact concept, our approaches to impact monitoring and project management, with the aim of helping you to better understand the impacts in the project examples in chapter 5.

What is “impact”?

“Impacts” refer to all the intended or unintended, positive or negative, medium-term and long-term effects triggered by the aid and project interventions. Constructing a well is not in itself an impact – we can only speak of a positive impact when we see, for instance, that the frequency of diarrhea in children drops after the well is in operation and is being put to use.

Why is impact monitoring an important topic for World Vision?

Monitoring the impacts of our work is an important issue for us for the following reasons:

- Continually reflecting upon changes should facilitate learning processes, both with our target groups and partners, but also at World Vision itself. New knowledge acquired should also enable ongoing projects to be adjusted or adapted.
- Impact monitoring is intended to help us be accountable to the target groups involved as well as partners, private donors, public donors and the public.
- The Core Humanitarian Standard (CHS) (the most important humanitarian standards), whose nine voluntary self-commitments we have pledged to undertake as an organization, emphasizes among other things in the 7th standard that interventions for local communities and target groups should improve through continuous reflection.¹
- By collecting data on the effectiveness of the planned interventions, we are fulfilling one of the five criteria of the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) that are considered as international standards.²

Various project types

At World Vision we differentiate between three types of project depending on the financing:

- Long-term (approx. ten to twelve years), area development programs financed by sponsor funds generally go through several planning cycles.
- Projects funded by private sponsors and/or companies are often added to area development programs. Their duration is often much shorter compared to long-term projects funded through sponsorship.
- The duration, focus and project management of projects that are financed by public donors (such as the European Union, the German Federal Foreign Office (AA), the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and the Credit Institute for Reconstruction (Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau, KfW) are determined by guidelines of the donor.

Project management at World Vision – together with families and partners

Our work takes place in a complex environment. There are a great number of people interacting with one another; they influence each other and are pursuing specific interests. Furthermore, there are often external factors (e.g. natural disasters or conflicts) which cannot be influenced at all, or only to a small extent.

World Vision has its own structures as well as staff members on the ground in project regions who work with local and international organizations, governments, groups and institutions, as well as with the families. The involvement and targeted professional support of partners and families aims to enable them to achieve, sustain and further develop the desired effects independently, even after the end of our intervention in the region. As an organization, it is of great importance that we use locally available resources and the knowledge and skills of the local people to initiate and facilitate development processes. The goal is that local stakeholders take over responsibilities in data collection, planning, project implementation, project monitoring and evaluation as well as that the project is transferred to the local people it affects. This includes constructive cooperation with local authorities and other government institutions. Partnership and participation therefore play an important role in

all phases of our project management³, which aims to make local people more capable of acting.⁴

Learning through evaluation

The project management cycle “LEAP – Learning through Evaluation with Accountability and Planning” is implemented on a global level in all of World Vision’s projects – both in development cooperation and in humanitarian aid in an adapted way.⁵ The complete cycle consists of five phases, from project planning to handover of the project to local stakeholders. Depending on the type of project they can differ in length. The processes may have to be adapted to the local context. Ideally, project management is as follows:

1. Data collection: On the basis of an analysis of the local socio-economic context, World Vision decides if a project should be begun or not. For area development programs that are financed by sponsorship funds, we analyze the current situation in terms of the well-being of children and whether their rights are being fulfilled or breached, for example. With this step we want to determine if a project is necessary. In addition, we look at which other stakeholders (government, authorities, other local or international organizations) are currently active in the region and how World Vision can cooperate with them. In fragile contexts, analyses on conflict sensitivity are also carried

out.⁶ In the case of a catastrophe, there are coordinated analyses from relevant stakeholders.

2. Planning: The planning phase then begins together with the local stakeholders relevant to the project (e.g. children, families, local and international organizations and authorities).⁷ We agree upon the project goals, interventions and indicators. The standard World Vision indicators are used here, especially in development cooperation projects. After the planning phase has been completed, a baseline (initial situation) is collected. Thanks to this baseline, any possible later changes can be determined in comparison to the starting phase. We have selected standard indicators for each of the sectors in which World Vision works. The “Compendium of Indicators” contains the definitions and notes about their contextualization and how to measure the indicators.

3. Project implementation and monitoring:

The activities as agreed are implemented. Depending on the sector and project goals, this is done in cooperation with and by teachers and healthcare staff, local authorities, organizations and religious communities, for example. The status and the quality of the implementation of the planned activities, the results and the possible direct impacts (see diagram on the next page) are continuously monitored during this phase. This monitoring is carried out by our partners, the families themselves and the project managers. We use

targeted data collection to receive relevant information to facilitate an internal learning and management process.

4. Evaluation: After an agreed time period we usually conduct an evaluation. Here, evaluation means systematically collecting information on a project and assessing it based on criteria (see box below). Evaluations can take place at different times in the project cycle – in the middle, at the end, or some time after the project has been finished. The evaluations are generally carried out by independent consultants.

Evaluations frequently comprise a mix of qualitative data collection (e.g. group or expert interviews, ranking methods), quantitative methods (e.g. surveys of the families), and document analyses. This mix of methods helps balance the weaknesses of a particular method and consider the project from various perspectives.

Depending on the time at which an evaluation is carried out, the recommendations in the planning process of a new project cycle can be adopted or taken into consideration in the planning of new projects. Moreover, they help us to continuously examine and improve our project approaches.

As a standard procedure, the evaluations carried out by World Vision use the DAC criteria of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)⁸ – relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability – as the basis for assessments. For humanitarian aid projects these criteria are adapted and expanded to include appropriateness, connectedness, and coverage. The criteria of efficiency, effectiveness and impact are kept, and the sustainability criterion is omitted in this case.

5. Project adaptation or project handover: In the next step, as a result of the lessons learned and the recommendations from the evaluation, the project is either continued with adaptations or the project managers hand the project over into the hands of local stakeholders. Ideally, this handover should be taken into consideration in the project’s planning phase. In humanitarian aid projects, there is also an exit strategy. In what are very often fragile contexts, local groups may be able to continue to carry out a few activities only. For this it is necessary to coordinate closely with other organizations.

Theory of change

By formulating causal-effect-relations we have a clearer understanding of how we can achieve our overall goals we are striving for – for example, “fewer children are malnourished”.⁹ Here the processes that we or our project partners carried out between the measures and the impact we want to achieve are especially important. In the following example of a simple impact chain we would like to illustrate what has to happen between a training session in nutrition and the long-term goal of “fewer children are malnourished”.

Between the single impact steps there are often further underlying assumptions that have to be taken into account. Whether or not participants of a training session learn something depends on many factors, such as the quality of the training session, the motivation of the participants and the general environment. The impact steps can, however, be assigned to the four levels mentioned.

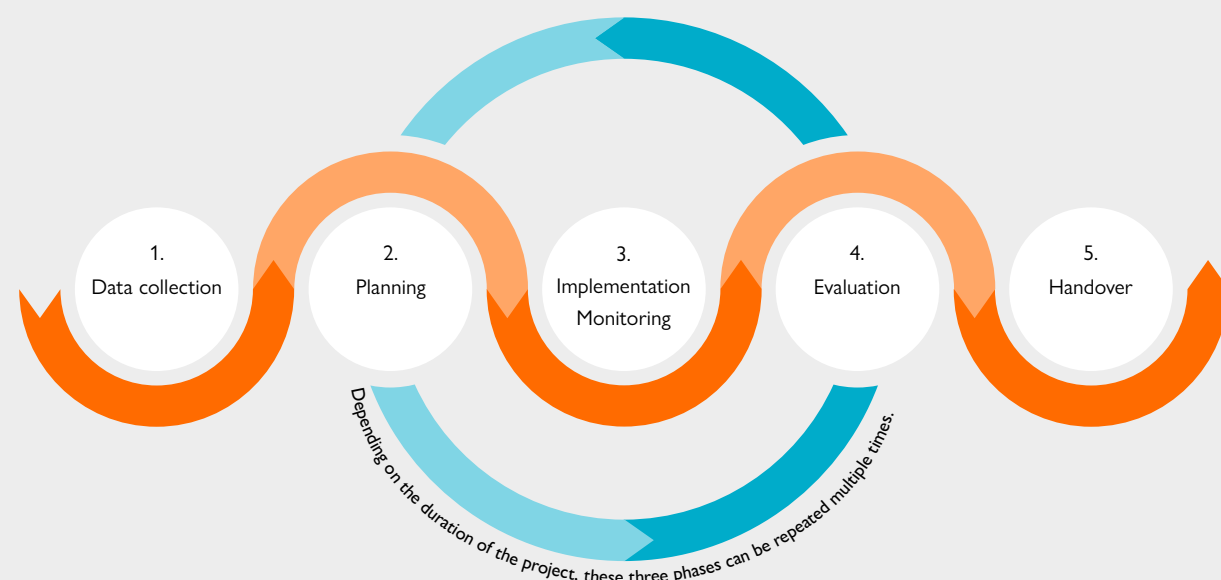
Indicators are defined for each level of an impact chain and we use these to identify if the changes we are aiming for are actually happening. On the one hand, this is to inform project managers and partners if it is likely that we will achieve the planned goals. On the other hand, it should also enable World Vision to be accountable to target groups as well as donors.

Example: Malnourishment

The following diagram is an example of the complexity of the theory of change. We are using the example of the rate of malnourishment among infants and how we would like to lower this. The more indirect a desired impact is, the more factors influence the expected result and must be taken into consideration in the planning. In this way, a child’s nutrition is also dependent on how well-equipped the health care stations are, how much awareness of hygiene there is, and whether there is access to clean drinking water and food.

We can learn from the illustration of the theory of change that thanks to training sessions, the parents have learned more about how they can improve their child’s nutrition and diet. Subsequently, the parents apply this newfound knowledge and thereby contribute to their children having a diet according to their needs, which in turn leads to fewer children being malnourished (activity 1). But even if parents are successfully educated in this respect, it does not necessarily mean that they will provide a better diet for their children. It may also be the case that for various

A LEAP project cycle consists of five phases



Levels	Activity	Result	Direct impact	Indirect impact
Impact steps	Parents are trained in proper nutrition and diet	Parents' knowledge increased	Parents provide their children with a better diet	Fewer children are underweight
Indicators	Number of parents trained	Number of parents with increased competencies	Number of children receiving a balanced diet	Number of underweight children

reasons the parents cannot implement this knowledge. For example, the content of the training sessions was perhaps not specific enough to the context and the target groups. Or maybe there are other conditions preventing participants from implementing this knowledge as intended. External factors such as a drought may also mean that there is not enough nutritious food or financial resources available.

Further components

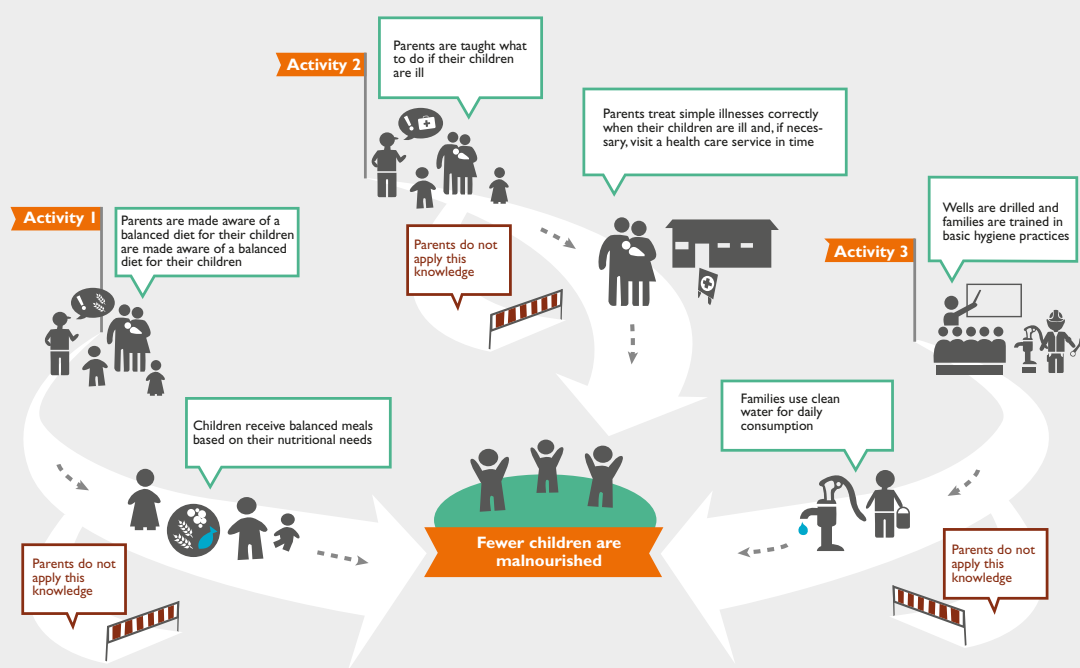
In order for there to be fewer infants suffering from malnutrition in the future, we must take further components into consideration. We can hereby assume that clean drinking water from new wells and training sessions in hygiene (activity 3) will contribute to reducing the number of malnourished children. But if

these wells are not maintained, or are maintained incorrectly, they may stop working.

In addition, knowing what to do in the case of illness (activity 2) also helps reduce the rate of malnutrition among children. It is very likely to have a negative impact on the goal of "reducing malnutrition" if parents are willing to visit a health care service with their children but find it difficult to reach it from where they live due to a lack of infrastructure.

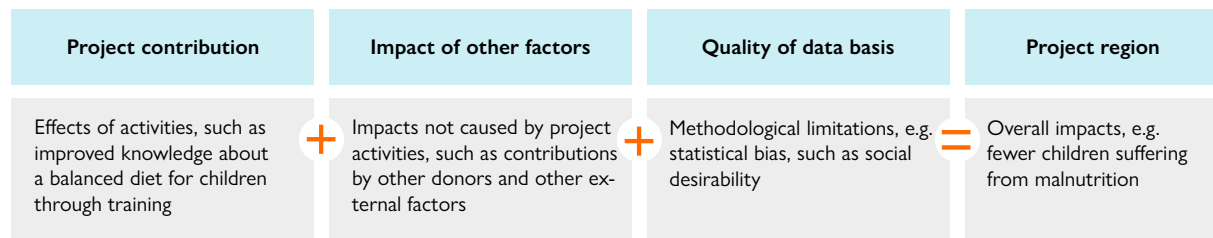
In the diagram on page 16 we would like to demonstrate how many factors have to be taken into account in a complex system made up of various groups of people and different influences in order to reduce the rate of malnourished children.

Simplified theory of change



Therefore, attempts are made in the course of planning a project to anticipate and mitigate any possible negative impacts. This is done under the "Do no harm" principle. "Do no harm" refers to the idea that help – in spite of good intentions – has an impact on an existing system. Every external intervention adds momentum. In accordance with the "do no harm approach", it is therefore important to take care that these impulses of momentum do not exacerbate conflicts or create negative effects. The idea is to identify

early on, prevent or mitigate unintentional and unwanted effects of humanitarian aid and development cooperation. In addition, it is crucial to find out how negative, crisis-inducing practices can be avoided and how positive, conflict-reducing influences as part of aid work can be increased. Moreover, it is important to monitor any negative impacts our work may have in the further course of the project and, if appropriate, take countermeasures.



Our contribution to the overall impacts in the project area

When reporting on the impacts of projects supported by World Vision, we must also reflect on the extent to which the observed changes are actually due to project activities. If, at the end of the project, there are fewer children suffering from malnutrition than at the start, that is a positive result, but it does not tell us anything about if it happened due to the activities World Vision implemented (please refer to the illustration below).

In addition, we are asking ourselves more questions, for example:

- Did we implement our activities effectively?
- Is the well we built working?
- Did the training sessions lead to parents knowing how to feed their children better?

Alongside the impacts of our activities, we also have to analyze the effects of other factors:

- Which other stakeholders have contributed, with their interventions, to children receiving better nutrition? This could be organizations or state initiatives or institutions.

- To what degree did context factors surrounding a plan change and influence the overall impact? For example, was there an extended period of drought or were there especially favorable climate conditions?

Opportunities and challenges in analyzing impacts

There are various methods for analyzing impacts which allow conclusions to be drawn with varying degrees of accuracy about the impacts of a project and their causes. For example, (quasi) experimental approaches allow a causal attribution of identified impacts to activities of a project. This allows precise statements about the effectiveness of a project to be made. These approaches are, however, comparatively expensive and complex to implement.

Experimental approaches are more suitable for less complex activities. However, the contexts, interventions and desired impacts of many of our projects are increasingly complex and it is necessary to analyze to what extent (quasi) experimental study designs can provide useful insights. Experimental evaluation designs only allow statements to the questions of “why?” and “how?” a change occurs if these are expanded by



qualitative data collection methods. These are just a few of the reasons why World Vision only uses evaluations with (quasi) experimental approaches in isolated cases and for very specific questions and projects (see chapter 7 – “Unlock Literacy” project in Burundi).

For most projects, World Vision carries out evaluations using a longitudinal design, whereby the initial situation is determined at the start of a project and further data is collected at a later time, meaning there is at least one data collection before and after the project intervention. This enables a trend for certain variables to be identified. A mix of methods taking the qualitative approaches into account should enable us to learn the reasons and how they influence the trends. Furthermore, qualitative methods also aim to facilitate the participation, ownership and the empowerment of both the target groups and our partners.

Impact monitoring in humanitarian aid

Overall, the requirements of impact monitoring in humanitarian aid do not differ greatly from the requirements in development cooperation. International standards¹⁰ also state here that the impacts of a project should be analyzed as part of an evaluation. Moreover, the requirements for the participation of

local target groups and stakeholders are defined in the Core Humanitarian Standard (CHS) and its nine commitments, developed in 2014. In this way, the project work aims to guarantee that target groups and local stakeholders have the opportunity to provide feedback on the quality and effectiveness of interventions (CHS, Key Actions 4.4). The projects should be adapted and changed based on the monitoring, evaluation, feedback and any possible complaints (CHS, Key Actions 7.2).

Although the requirements regarding impacts are comparable, the context is of particular importance. The more fragile the context and the greater the amount of emergency aid interventions required, the more important it is to continuously adapt the monitoring to the changing conditions (adaptive management). This alone will ensure the constant relevance of the interventions. Since the project interventions generally only run for between three and twelve months, long-term effects can rarely be achieved in emergency aid. Special processes and approaches, such as remote evaluations in hard-to-reach contexts, are also relevant as part of evaluations. Due to the short-term nature of emergency aid projects, real-time evaluations carried out as part of a project are particularly important in order to ensure the relevance of the aid interventions in the best possible way. Often even medium-term effects are a great success, as emergency aid is primarily targeted at saving lives.

Chapter 4:

What has been happening?

Recommendations from the 2nd impact report

Systematically analyzing and preparing the evaluation reports for the impact reports are a good opportunity for us as an organization to learn and continuously improve the work we do. In this chapter we would like to present the recommendations contained in the 2nd impact report, to what extent we have implemented these, and what challenges have arisen as a result.

1st recommendation:

Increase the transparency of impacts

The full evaluation reports which are cited in this report can all be found online (worldvision.de/evaluationsberichte). Since the previous impact report we have also started to put the summaries of several evaluation reports from the team of consultants online. This is not subject to specific selective criteria. The selection was made at random, but we endeavor to present a wide range of regions and financial sources. The evaluation reports for the impact report were selected in the same way.

2nd recommendation:

Better demonstrate how project interventions contribute to changes

We have adopted two new points as standards in the terms of references for consultants.

- Check the theory of change of projects
- Survey and analyze the project contribution to the changes and impacts

In addition, in the evaluation inception report we endeavor to monitor if these two points have been methodologically planned well by the consultants. Nonetheless, this is a challenging area for us. World Vision Germany as an organization has only a limited influence as we do not commission many evaluations ourselves, with most evaluations being assigned by local staff members in the field offices. Unfortunately, in these two cases the quality is often not what we would expect. Although in the last two years we have looked at the evaluation inception report with the methodological design of the evaluations in addition to the local staff, this remains challenging. On the one hand, there is often no time left to incorporate

changes in a meaningful way before the data is collected and to create methodological understanding amongst the consultants, for example. This is due to World Vision itself, as the planning processes for evaluations were not initiated early enough to ensure sufficient lead time. On the other hand, the phases of collecting and evaluating data seem to be critical and there is a gap between the theoretical conception and the practical implementation of the evaluations. This would require an even closer exchange of ideas with the consultants, for which we unfortunately do not have the personnel resources.

3rd recommendation:

Stronger involvement of target groups in the evaluation process

Even if this is not yet evident in the meta evaluation up to 2017, since 2018 we have been asking for the systematic involvement of local stakeholders in the evaluation concepts and reports. We do this by including specific key questions in the terms of references for the consultants.

4th recommendation:

Systematic anchoring of sustainability in planning, monitoring and evaluation

By generally making sustainability a subject of discussion in the evaluation reports we are also able to estimate the durability of project impacts. For example, we are asking the question: Do the evaluation reports contain sufficient information to be able to determine the level of sustainability? As part of a meta evaluation, we regularly have the methodological quality of our evaluation reports examined. And as a result of the recommendation from the 2nd impact report, we added the additional category of “sustainability” for the meta evaluation in 2017 (see the meta evaluation overall report carried out by the Center of Evaluations (CEval)).¹

The following three assessment criteria were taken into consideration:

- Analysis of the durability of impacts
- Consideration of the perspectives of the target groups on sustainability

- Capacities of the partner organizations and ownership to ensure sustainability

Overall, the reports from all 33 private and public financed projects which were evaluated in 2016 and 2017 were analyzed. These include development co-operation projects as well as humanitarian aid projects. The illustration here shows that 24 reports were evaluated as being very good to satisfactory, based on the criteria detailed above. However, in nine cases the aspects of sustainability were not sufficiently analyzed or were not analyzed at all. The CEval rates this as a multilayered pattern with development potential for the future.

Rating of the category “sustainability”



Evaluations with focus on sustainability

On this map we have marked all the countries where World Vision Germany is active. Furthermore, it shows the countries and projects whose evaluations from 2018 and 2019 were included in this impact report.

In the following two chapters the results of seven selected evaluations will be presented in detail with focus on the topic of sustainability.

● Countries whose evaluations will be presented in the following chapters

● Countries in which World Vision Germany is active

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
<p>Mauritania</p> <p>Area Development Program in Aghorat</p> <p>Beneficiaries: 16,459 people</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health • Economic development • Local advocacy <p>Duration: 2014 to 2029 (planned)</p> <p>● ● Interim evaluation</p>	<p>Senegal</p> <p>Area Development Program in Kathiotte</p> <p>Beneficiaries: 18,923 people</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health • Food security • Education <p>Duration: 1999 to 2018</p> <p>● ● Final evaluation</p>	<p>Burundi</p> <p>“Unlock Literacy” – Children learn to read</p> <p>Beneficiaries: 987 people</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education <p>Duration: 2015 to 2018</p> <p>● ● Final evaluation</p>	<p>Jordan</p> <p>Strengthening Syrian and local children and young people in Jordan</p> <p>Beneficiaries: 7,712 people</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peacebuilding and resilience • Health <p>Duration: 2015 to 2018</p> <p>● ● Final evaluation</p>	<p>Iraq</p> <p>Protection and strengthening of children in Kirkuk affected by conflicts</p> <p>Beneficiaries: 1,450 people</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education • Child Protection • Health <p>Duration: 2016 to 2017</p> <p>● ● Final evaluation</p>	<p>India</p> <p>Area Development Program in Umarga</p> <p>Beneficiaries: 28,454 people</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education • Food security and income • Water, sanitation and hygiene <p>Duration: 1996 to 2015</p> <p>● ● Ex-post evaluation</p>	<p>Sri Lanka</p> <p>Strengthening the role of civil society organizations</p> <p>Beneficiaries: 45,000 people</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local advocacy • Economic development <p>Duration: 2016 to 2019</p> <p>● ● Final evaluation</p>

Project types:

- Development cooperation
- Humanitarian aid

Financing:

- Sponsorship
- EuropeAid/DEVCO
- German Federal Foreign Office (AA)
- Additional private donations
- German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)

Chapter 5: Focus on Sustainability – Evaluations of six projects

Following the recommendations from the 2nd impact report, our focus in this 3rd impact report is on the topic of sustainability (see recommendations in chapter 4). The term ‘sustainability’ refers to the durability of positive impacts. The sustainability criteria of the Development Assistance Committee (DAC), of the OECD¹, which we as an organization are committed to, is vital for this understanding. In addition, we have looked at and analyzed three further DAC evaluation criteria – relevance, effectiveness and impact – for their significance on sustainability.

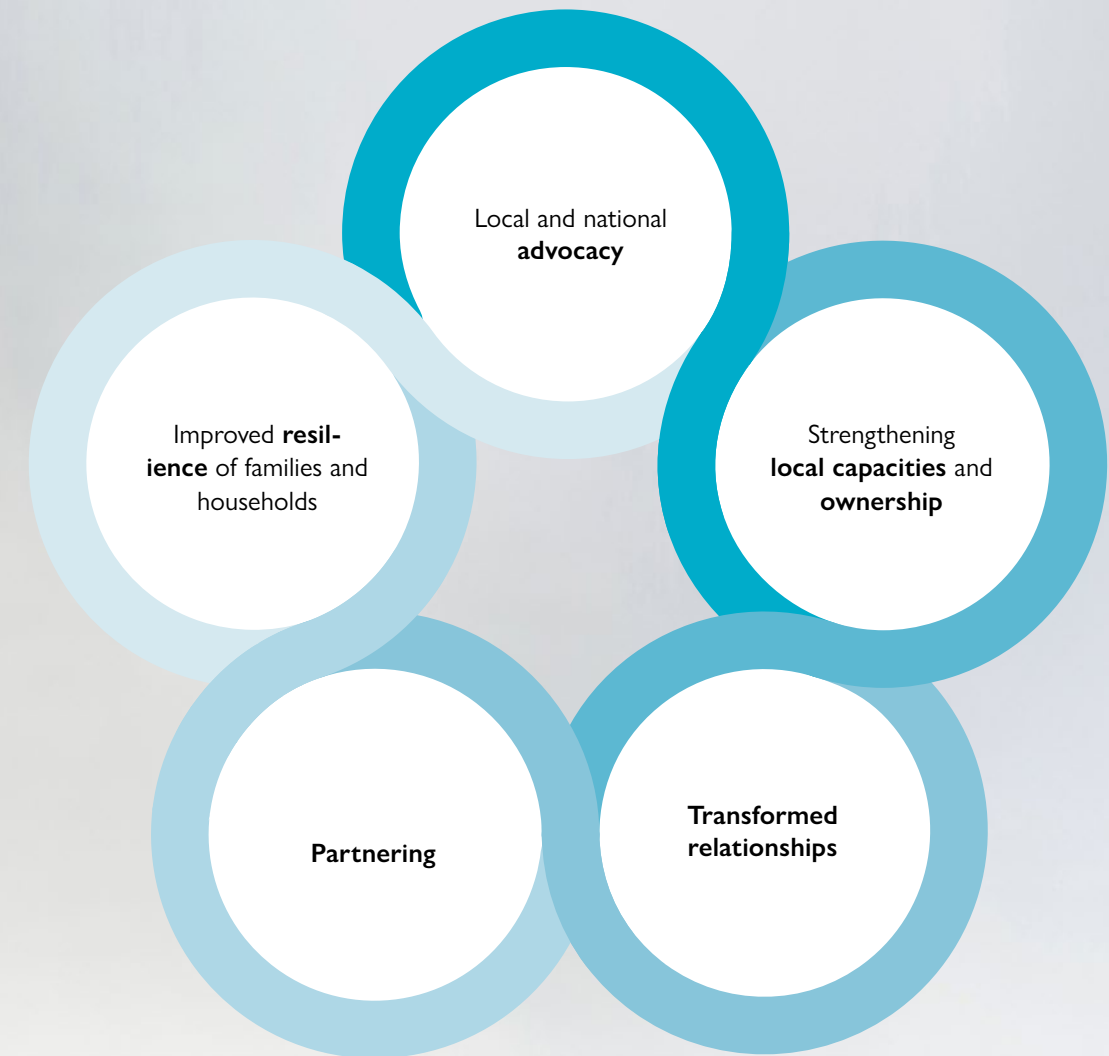
What remains when a project is finished? Can positive changes and impacts in the projects from the local stakeholders be sustained? Do they have the capacities and financial resources as required? Which factors enable the continuation of the positive impacts? These are the key questions we tackled and used to design an approach for the analyses.

What are the factors that enable sustainability?

The overall objective for the international World Vision partnership is the sustained well-being of the world’s most vulnerable children. To ensure sustainability in our work, World Vision is working with five drivers of sustainability. These factors enable sustainable impacts and shall be taken into consideration in each project, both during planning and implementation. Positive impacts can only be created and sustained if this is done effectively.

The five drivers of sustainability:

- The **ownership** of the target groups should be encouraged early on in the project planning, as this leads to better use of the capacities acquired and the resources provided. Actively involving people in the project regions in our work empowers them to independently achieve and sustain the impacts as planned. Furthermore, the **capacities and resources** of the local project partners and target groups have to be systematically strengthened during the course of the project.
- **Transformed relationships:** The project activities aim to strengthen child protection, conflict prevention and resolution skills as well as shared values such as equality, mutual support and trust.
- The **resilience of families** must be increased so that they are better prepared to overcome crises and can adjust to changing external factors.
- For this, functioning **partnerships** and cooperation with local actors are required to enable the planned activities to be implemented effectively.
- Enabling beneficiaries to get involved in local and national **advocacy** means that they are able to demand changes and their rights from governments in power, thereby also taking on more **ownership**.



Important factors for sustainability in planning and implementation



Project design

The project design lays the foundations for sustainable changes.

Implementation

A participatory implementation process strengthens sustainability.

Program end

What can we say about our contribution to the sustainability of the project? The likelihood of sustainable impacts can only be estimated at the end of the project. Ideally, sustainability is analyzed in ex-post evaluations.



Analysis approach for the project evaluations

On the basis of these considerations, over the last two years we have analyzed the the project evaluation by applying the five drivers of sustainability of World Vision and the DAC criteria. The DAC criteria present an overarching and normative framework for evaluations of international cooperation. On the next level down are the five drivers for sustainability from World Vision. These two levels produce concrete test questions for the evaluation of sustainability. For this, we assume a mutual interaction, both between the five drivers and with the DAC criteria of **relevance, impact, effectiveness and sustainability**.

Whether effects are actually sustainable can only be determined some time **after the end of a project** (ex post evaluation). There is the opportunity **during a project** to assess the sustainability as part of an interim evaluation. As part of this, the following questions arise: Is it likely that positive impacts will be achieved from the interventions to strengthen capacities? Does the context allow the planned impacts to be sustained as originally planned? Are the stakeholders actively getting involved on their own initiative? Are they taking ownership?



Is there any plan being continuously adapted for local stakeholders to take over the responsibilities after the project has finished? The evaluation results can then be taken into consideration during the remaining duration of the project. At the **end of the project** (final evaluation), only the likelihood of sustainability of positive impacts can be assessed.

Evaluation in humanitarian aid – the criterion connectedness

In order to evaluate projects in humanitarian aid, the OECD has developed adapted DAC criteria.² In particular, the criterion of sustainability is not easy to apply in humanitarian aid, since it depends heavily on the context if long-term impacts can be expected. In emergency aid, project interventions focus on saving lives in acute emergency situations. **For emergency interventions therefore, the criterion connectedness has more relevance than sustainability.** The aim is to assess the extent to which short-term interventions are planned and implemented in a way that takes into account longer-term and interconnected problems. For this, we concentrated on the key question of whether there is an exit strategy that determines who can take over expiring project responsibilities.





Baseline at the start of the project:

A survey is carried out at the beginning to map the initial situation.

Development cooperation

Fragile contexts and transitional aid

An **interim evaluation** is then carried out after a pre-arranged period of time, e.g. at the end of a project phase or in the middle of a project. This should provide information on the extent to which the necessary foundations for the future continuation of impacts have been established by then and what changes have been achieved. On this basis, the project can be adapted or new plans can be made.

Final evaluation at the end of the project:

With regard to sustainability, the likelihood is assessed with which achieved impacts and positive changes can be sustained by local stakeholders and beneficiaries. All impacts and changes are measured. World Vision finishes its work in the project area and transfers responsibilities to local stakeholders to ensure sustainability.

An ex-post evaluation is

carried out one to two years after the end of the project at the earliest. This assesses the continuation of the impacts and, if necessary, statements are made about the future sustainability of the impacts.

Sustainability in our projects

For the analysis we used six evaluation reports, on the basis of which we would like to illustrate issues concerning the sustainability of impacts. We decided to present a detailed discussion on this topic using case studies. This enables us to analyze questions of lasting effects in detail and to depict the topic in all its diversity across different project contexts and phases. We have selected four development cooperation (DC) projects and two projects from fragile contexts according to their content, sector and duration.

In the following texts, we have subjectively highlighted aspects that are relevant from our perspective. To ensure transparency, we have put the fact sheets and evaluation reports from the consultants online.

You can find the full evaluation reports at worldvision.de/evaluationsberichte

Excursus:
The nexus between humanitarian aid, development cooperation and peacebuilding

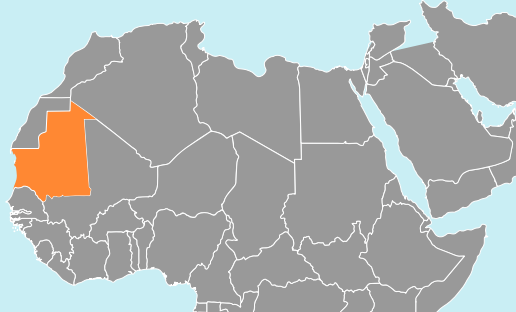
Since 2015, improved cooperation between the areas of humanitarian aid, development cooperation and peacebuilding – nexus for short – has been increasingly discussed.

The aim is to improve cooperation, coherence and complementarity between the three areas. The nexus approach aims to use the advantages of each pillar, insofar as they are relevant to the specific context, to meet needs, strengthen risk management capacities and address the causes of conflict. It should also ensure complementary and coherent planning, coordination, financing and measurement of collective results and impacts.

The nexus topic plays an important role in the context of long-lasting crises in particular, such as the Syrian crisis. The question of the necessary link between humanitarian aid and development cooperation and peace building is taken up in the project examples from Jordan and Iraq.



Project Example Mauritania



Area Development Program in Aghorat

Participation of families as a basis for sustainability

Interim evaluation

Beneficiaries:
16,459 people

Project type:
Development cooperation

Duration:
2014 to 2029 (planned)

Financing:
Sponsorship



The Area Development Program in the Aghorat region in Mauritania has been running since 2014. In the rural area where the project is being carried out, temperatures of more than 40 degrees Celsius are commonplace. Families live in sparsely populated villages located far away from one another. Access to drinking water and health care services are severely limited.

Project goal and activities

The goal of this first project phase was to improve the health situation and the economic situation of the families.

Sectors	Activities
Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Construction of three wells in cooperation with local authorities Mobile health care advice
Economic development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthening the savings groups Goat breeding using the principle of rotation
Local advocacy work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Educating citizens about their rights and the duties of the authorities

Approach for the evaluation

At the end of the first project cycle in 2018, an external team of consultants evaluated the project in Aghorat with the aim of finding out to what extent the necessary basis for sustainable impacts had been achieved in the first few years of the project. Therefore, the evaluation was on the one hand intended to provide learnings for the future. On the other hand, the evaluation was designed so that the local partners and target groups could be closely involved in the reflection and decision-making process. They should acquire skills and knowledge which allows them to shape change processes independently in the future. The evaluation process itself is thus intended to facilitate sustainability. During the evaluation only qualitative data was collected.



Selected results³

Health

- | | |
|------------------------|--|
| Positive change | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4,300 families gained access to clean drinking water |
| Side effect | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trust in World Vision as a new partner and our work was increased, thereby facilitating further project work |



Sustainability: The aim is that people from local committees shall maintain the wells in future to ensure that the impact is sustained in the long term. These people were trained in this task. However, there was no precise analysis to see how far the training sessions carried out could guarantee that the wells would be maintained. But this will be crucial in this region in particular where the settlements are hard to reach and widely dispersed. The next phase of the project is now focusing on ensuring that the committees diligently follow through with their tasks. This should be monitored regularly.

Economic Development

- | | |
|------------------------|---|
| Positive change | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are 37 functioning savings groups with 835 – predominantly female – members |
| Challenge | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The admission criteria (e.g. starting capital) for the savings groups are a high barrier for especially vulnerable families |



Sustainability: The savings groups are an important element for sustainably improving the livelihoods of its members. Money is saved communally and given to especially vulnerable people in the form of small loans. In this way, people are not dependent on other money lenders. According to the evaluation report, the savings groups offer the opportunity to strengthen both men and women's skills in other areas too, such as child protection, nutrition, and health. This has already proven to be successful in other projects in Mauritania.⁴ For the next phase of the project, World Vision has the task of making it possible for even the poorest groups to have a sustainable livelihood.



Economic Development

No change

- Goat breeding using the principle of rotation has not improved families' incomes

Challenge

- Overseeing the animals has proved difficult. There are also challenges in obtaining feed and the planned transfer of the kids

Sustainability: The consultant recommended holding discussions with the target groups as to whether this approach can be adapted or continued. Otherwise we must look for alternative approaches for the next project phase in order to create better livelihoods for especially vulnerable families.



Local Advocacy

Positive change

- Citizens regularly monitor and document on how legal regulations are implemented

Challenge

- The local committee members who are involved with advocacy live far away from one another and cannot therefore meet to discuss and exchange ideas on a regular basis

Sustainability: The local advocacy approach (Citizen Voice and Action⁵, see chapter 2 on page 10) has proven to be an effective measure in enabling sustainability. The target groups and partners are first of all informed about their rights, such as in terms of the compulsory presence of teachers or the quotas of teaching staff to children as required by law.

This training session provided citizens with access to necessary information. The parents then selected the legal regulations that were most important for them, and these were to be regularly monitored and documented. This was done by noting down on a simple sheet of paper whether teachers were present on a daily basis, for instance.

As a next step, regular meetings with those in charge and local authorities were organized to discuss the situation. From experience we know that the combination of knowledge, documentation and discussion leads to improvements in the situation. This process has also led to some initial positive results in Aghorat, for example in some schools the number of teachers has increased.

Conclusion



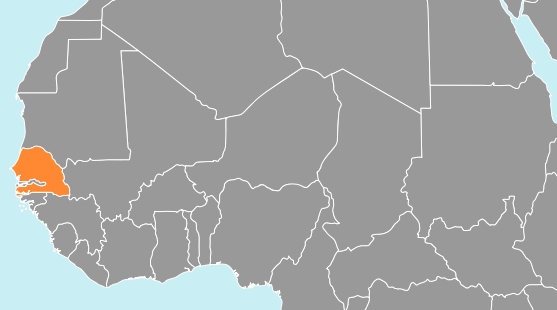
- The evaluation report lists a great number of positive preconditions for sustainable impacts: Degree of participation, capacities for analysis and ownership of local stakeholders. This provides a good basis for the next phase of the project.



- The consultant critically assessed the fact that in the first four years, due to strategic restructuring at World Vision Mauritania, there were many changes in the sector approaches and focal points of the project. This had an effect on the formulation of indicators and made project work and impact monitoring more difficult.



Project Example Senegal



Area Development Program in Kathiotte

Water as the basis for wide-ranging developments

Final evaluation

Beneficiaries:
18,923 people

Project type:
Development cooperation

Duration:
1999 to 2018

Financing:
Sponsorship



Initial situation

The Area Development Program in Kathiotte in the Kaffrine region of Senegal was started in 1999 and ended in 2018 after a total of 19 years. At the start of the project, one of the biggest challenges was the lack of access to clean drinking water. Furthermore, the health and educational situation posed many problems.

Project goal and activities

In Kathiotte, the goal was to improve people's quality of life in the areas of health, food security and education.

Sectors	Activities
Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishing village pharmacies and health posts Training health care personnel and volunteers Construction of infrastructure for drinking water Training water committees
Food security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Setting up vegetable gardens with a drip irrigation system Setting up public water points for animal watering troughs Foundation of grain banks Foundation of savings groups
Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Training teachers Construction of schools Establishing kindergartens

A special feature in this project region is that World Vision Germany has implemented two projects in the water and agriculture sectors over the past ten years together with the European Union. Here, too, the evaluation should provide indications of the extent to which possible synergies have been used.



Approach for the evaluation

As part of this external evaluation, the first step was to survey the families (quantitative survey). This was followed by focus group discussions and individual interviews (qualitative survey). In the household survey, the focus was on measuring indicators that had already been collected at earlier stages of the project (baseline values).

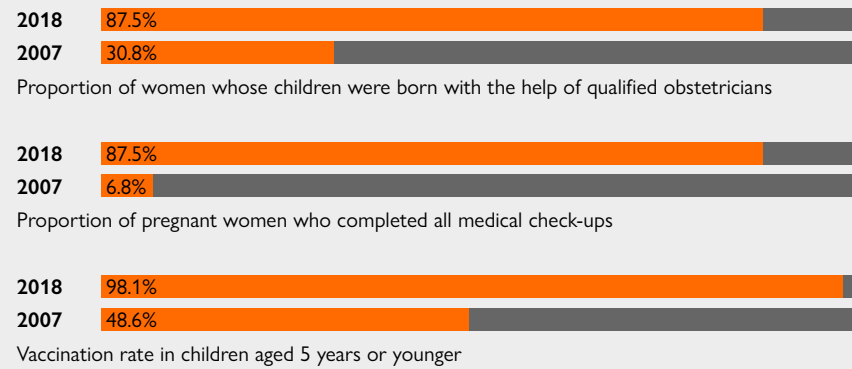
The first baseline was not conducted until 2007, seven years after the start of the project. As such, there is unfortunately no data available from the previous phase or from the beginning of the project.

Selected results⁶

From 2007 onwards, all indicators of the project continued to improve until the end of the project in 2018 (see diagram on the next page). The plain figures, however, do not provide any detail about the impacts achieved by the project. But even if the evaluation does not allow a precise causal attribution of the changes to the activities of the project, the evaluation report gives an indication of the project's contribution.

Health	
Positive changes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improvements in health care
Project contribution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Three health posts and twelve village pharmacies have been set up in close cooperation with the village community Strengthening of capacities of health personnel and volunteers





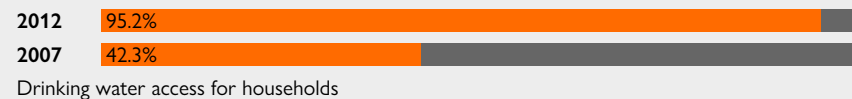
Sustainability: According to the evaluation report, the impacts on health care are rated as being sustainable to a limited extent. The fact that the local authorities took over responsibility at an early stage in the project is a positive sign for sustainability, and the strengthening of the capacities of the health care personnel and volunteers is also positive to a certain extent. However, this is also limited by possible changes in personnel and the loss of knowledge this entails. A non-sustainable activity mentioned in the evaluation report is the acquisition of two vehicles for health posts, which can be used to quickly get to remote villages in emergencies. At the time of the evaluation in April 2019, both vehicles were not in working order.



Water and Health

Impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fewer children aged under 5 years are suffering from diarrhea: 15% (2019) compared to 29.1% (2007)
Positive changes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved access to drinking water
Project contribution to the impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Construction of eleven wells, nine water towers and water pipes in all villages in the project area Training the water committees in maintaining the infrastructure in close cooperation with local authorities

The evaluation showed a connection between the use of clean drinking water and a lower rate of diarrheal diseases in children aged under five years.



Sustainability: The likelihood of the sustainability of these impacts is mainly supported by the functionality of the water committees and the involvement of the municipality in knowledge transfer. This means that operation and maintenance of the infrastructure is the responsibility of the people on site. The interviews with the members of the water committees show that these are currently working well and they can carry out repairs independently. In addition, many of the water committees have sufficient funds to have repairs fixed.



Food Security

Positive change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Families' access to food has improved
Project contribution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Three grain banks with 2,572 members have been established Almost 2,000 small farmers are now using the FMNR method for revegetating leached ground to promote sustainable soil fertility Public water points for animal watering troughs have been set up A drip irrigation system has been installed in vegetable gardens for families over an area of three hectares 84 savings groups have been founded



Sustainability: The team of consultants highlighted the work of the 84 savings groups in the project area as being highly effective. These self-governing groups offer families the opportunity to borrow and invest money at a low cost. According to the evaluation report, 89% of families are in a position to pay back their small loans on time. These are strong indications that the likelihood of sustainability is high, especially for the savings groups themselves, but also for food security for families overall. Furthermore, the synergies between the individual project sectors were described as positive in the evaluation report. However, the evaluation team critically stated that the project's indicators did not reflect important changes in behavior. For example, changes relating to chronic malnourishment were not measured. We were therefore unable to determine if it is only access to food that has improved or whether the eating habits of families have changed. The team of consultants has therefore highlighted how important systemic surveying of behavior changes among the target groups is to be able to better assess the sustainability of impacts.

Conclusions



- Increase in capacities and ownership: great commitment of the target groups organized in savings groups. The team of consultants are optimistic that families will benefit from some impacts and continue to use their newly acquired skills.
- Synergies between different sector projects strengthen positive impacts and contribute to improving living conditions (especially health and agriculture).
- Partnering: the team of consultants highlighted the project planning cycles as being especially positive, and they have been integrated into local planning processes since 2008.
- Strengthening ownership of the target groups and local advocacy: the introduction of the local advocacy approach Citizen Voice and Action (CVA) in the last program cycle was also praised as a potential factor in strengthening target groups. This long-term approach is intended to enable the target groups to demand the minimum standards set by law, e.g. in the health sector. However, its late introduction was described as unfavorable. It is difficult to assess whether the processes introduced will stay in place in the long term.



- Increased capacities and changes in behavior were not systematically surveyed and analyzed due to the limited budget and methodological challenges.
- It was critically noted that there were too few measures in the project dedicated to young people and young men. This raised the question of the extent to which the project can counteract the rural exodus which, in the long-term, can have a negative impact on the development of the project area.



Project Example India



Area Development Program Umarga

Sustainability due to active ownership

Ex-post evaluation

Beneficiaries:
28,454 people

Financing:
Sponsorship

Duration:
1996 to 2015

Project type:
Development cooperation



Initial situation

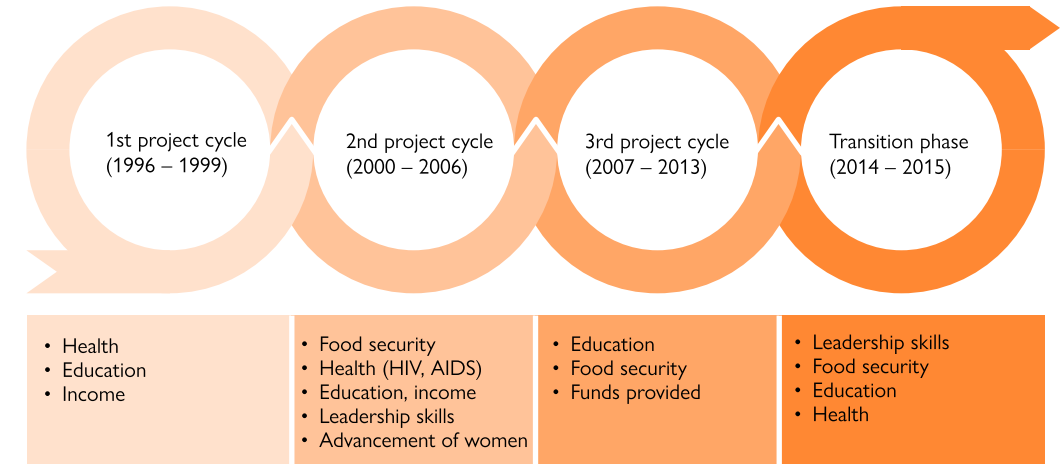
The Area Development Program in Umarga started in 1996 after the emergency aid interventions following the 1993 earthquake came to an end. The biggest challenges for children and their families were in the areas of health, food security and education.

Project goal and activities

Over the entire course of the project, World Vision worked actively in Umarga in the sectors of health, water and hygiene, food security, income and education.

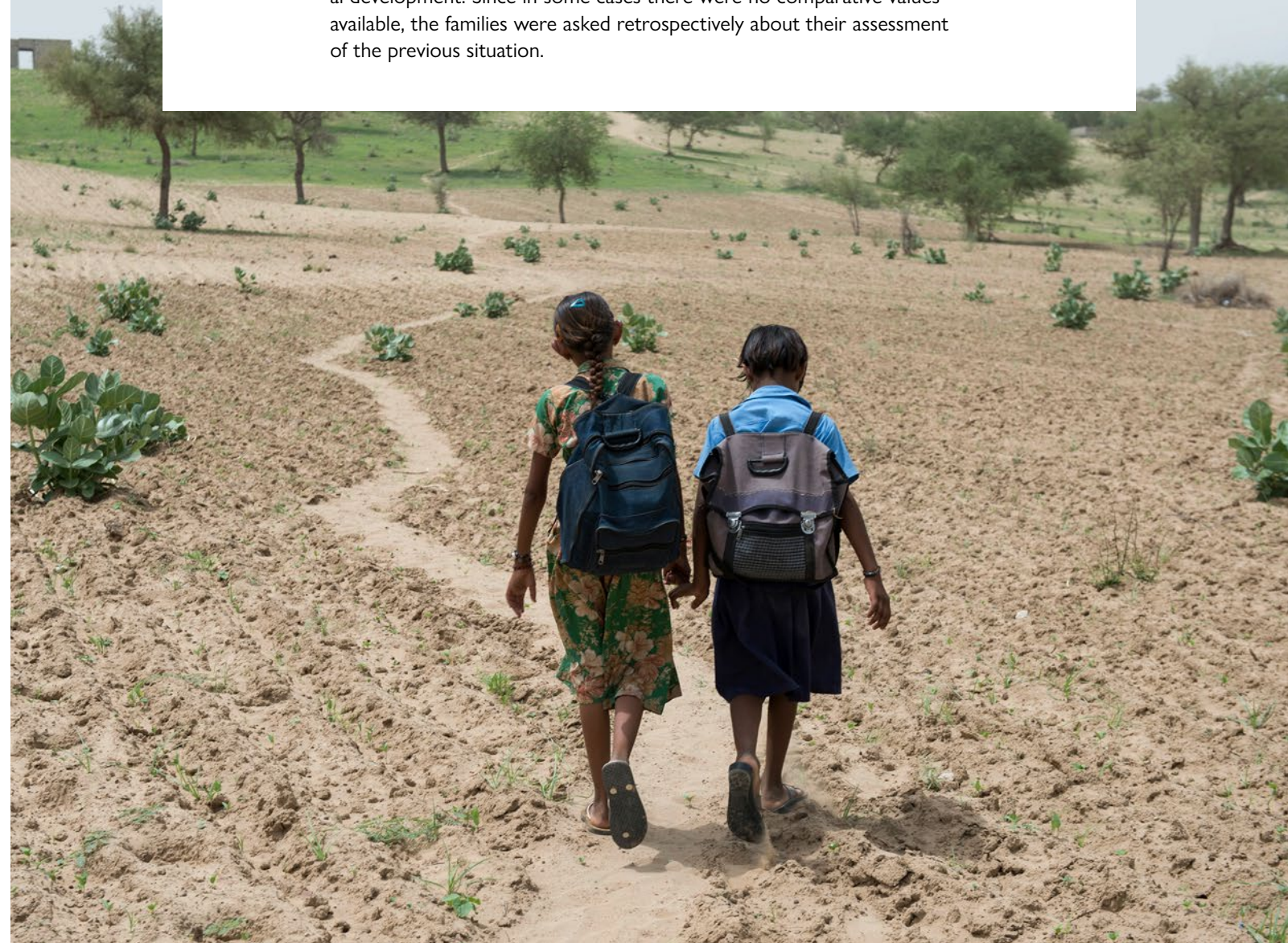
Sectors	Activities
Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing equipment in elementary and high schools • Setting up children's clubs
Food security and income	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training in modern cultivation methods • Access to seeds • Job training opportunities (e.g. tailoring, computer science, etc.) • Organization management
Health, water, hygiene and sanitation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing information on nutrition and hygiene • Construction of toilets • Construction of wells and water pipes

The final project cycle ended in 2013. This was followed by a two-year transition phase to strengthen sustainability. Various measures were taken to strengthen sustainability, for example the capacities of local stakeholders were further improved.



Approach for the evaluation

In this text we refer to the evaluation report from 2016 and an ex-post evaluation from 2019. While the evaluation analyzed the capacities of local stakeholders two years after the project was actually completed (2013), a representative household survey and interviews with local stakeholders were carried out again as part of the ex-post evaluation. 20% of the 279 local organizations were asked about the organizational development. Since in some cases there were no comparative values available, the families were asked retrospectively about their assessment of the previous situation.



Selected results



Ownership and resilience

Results

- High resilience of the families: 91% of families believe that they can overcome difficult situations independently
- Local networks, stakeholders and organizations are still active and work for the well-being of children

Sustainability: The evaluation in 2016 showed that the project cooperation partners – more than 205 self-help groups and six networks of local NGOs – were already working very actively in the project region for the well-being of children. In 2019 there were a total of 279 local organizations and stakeholders. According to an estimation from the team of consultants in 2019, most organizations are still active and working for the children and families in the villages, four years after the project has finished. This also has a positive effect on the resilience of families.



Nutrition and income

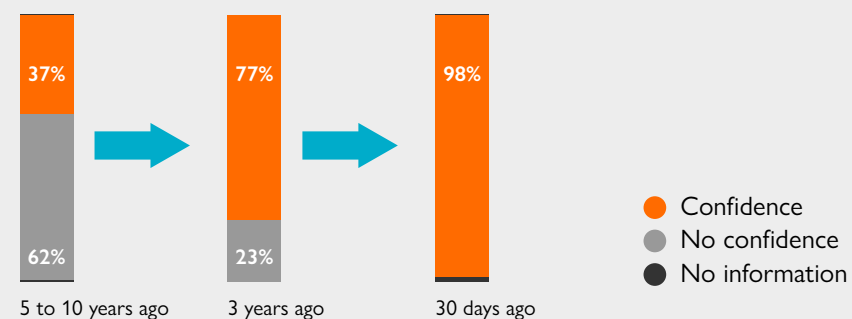
Results

- 71% of families can provide for their children
- The nutritional situation of families has improved
- 60% of families have a higher income
- For 72% of families, their income is not sufficient to cover their expenses

Sustainability: During group discussions, a number of local stakeholders stated that the economic situation had improved due to many of the project activities. Network representatives specified that the progress could be seen in the agriculture, income and nutrition sectors especially.

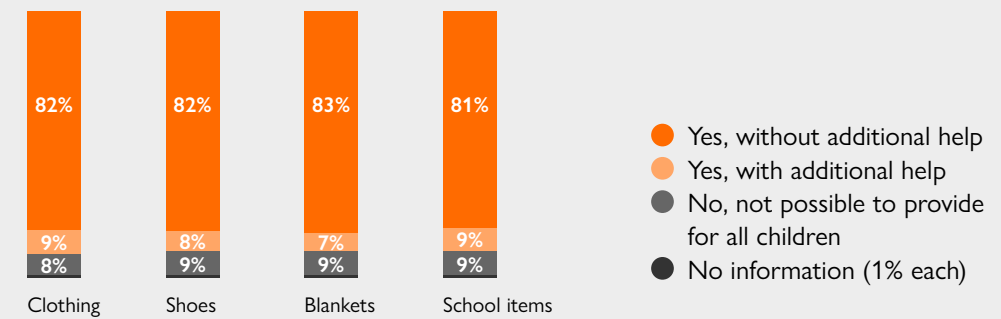
60% of those interviewed in the household survey stated that their income had increased. However, 72% of those surveyed also answered that their income was not enough to cover all their expenses incurred. We were interested in finding out the effect these statements may have had on the nutritional situation of the population.

Confidence that the family has enough to eat (household survey, August 2019)



As part of the household survey in 2019, 98% of families stated that they do not worry about having enough food. 71% of families said that they can easily provide for their children. The description “easily provide for” is comprised of the following criteria:

Parents can provide for their children (household survey, August 2019)



Water and sanitation

Results

- In 2019 91% of families had access to drinking water, compared to 60% in 2015
- In 2019 80% of families had their own toilet, compared to 49% in 2015

Sustainability: In the water and sanitation sector, there is once again a significant improvement in access to drinking water and toilets compared with the situation at the end of the project in 2015. Unfortunately the evaluation report from 2019 did not contain any explanation for this improvement and who was involved in it. However, we can at least see the trend of the positive changes that the project had generated up to 2015 being sustained and even expanded.

Conclusions

- Families' lives have improved in many important aspects (income, health, water and sanitation), both throughout the project until 2015 and in the three years following the end of the project.
- The resilience of the families and the ownership and capacities of local stakeholders have been strengthened effectively during project implementation and are sustainable. In addition, the cooperation among partners also improved.
- The ex-post evaluation from 2019 did not provide enough data to assess the sustainability of many of the positive changes and impacts.

Project Example Sri Lanka

Strengthening the role of civil society organizations

Final evaluation

Beneficiaries:
45,000 people

Duration:
2016 to 2019



Financing:
EuropeAid/DEVCO

Project type:
Development cooperation



Initial situation

In Sri Lanka, civil society organizations (CSOs) have always played an important role in the development of the country and in particular of its agricultural sector. However, many CSOs in rural regions lacked the resources and skills to adequately fulfill their function as civil society voices in these regions. Local authorities in the countryside are often limited in their capacities and decisions are frequently made on a national level without the voices of the rural population being heard.

Project goal and activities

Following on from this, the European Union-funded project “Bringing the community on board: Strengthening the role of CSOs in increasing the economic resilience of communities” was carried out from 2016 to 2019, with the goal of strengthening CSOs in their role as pioneers in promoting inclusive, sustainable and local economic development. The associated strengthening of livelihoods and resilience of small farmers and their families should contribute indirectly to improving the well-being of children. Local CSOs and authorities were empowered to feed local needs into the national development planning process. The project was carried out jointly by World Vision Germany, World Vision Sri Lanka and a local partner organization. It took place in three areas of the Badulla district in Uva province: Kandaketiya, Ridimaliyadda and Meegahakiula.

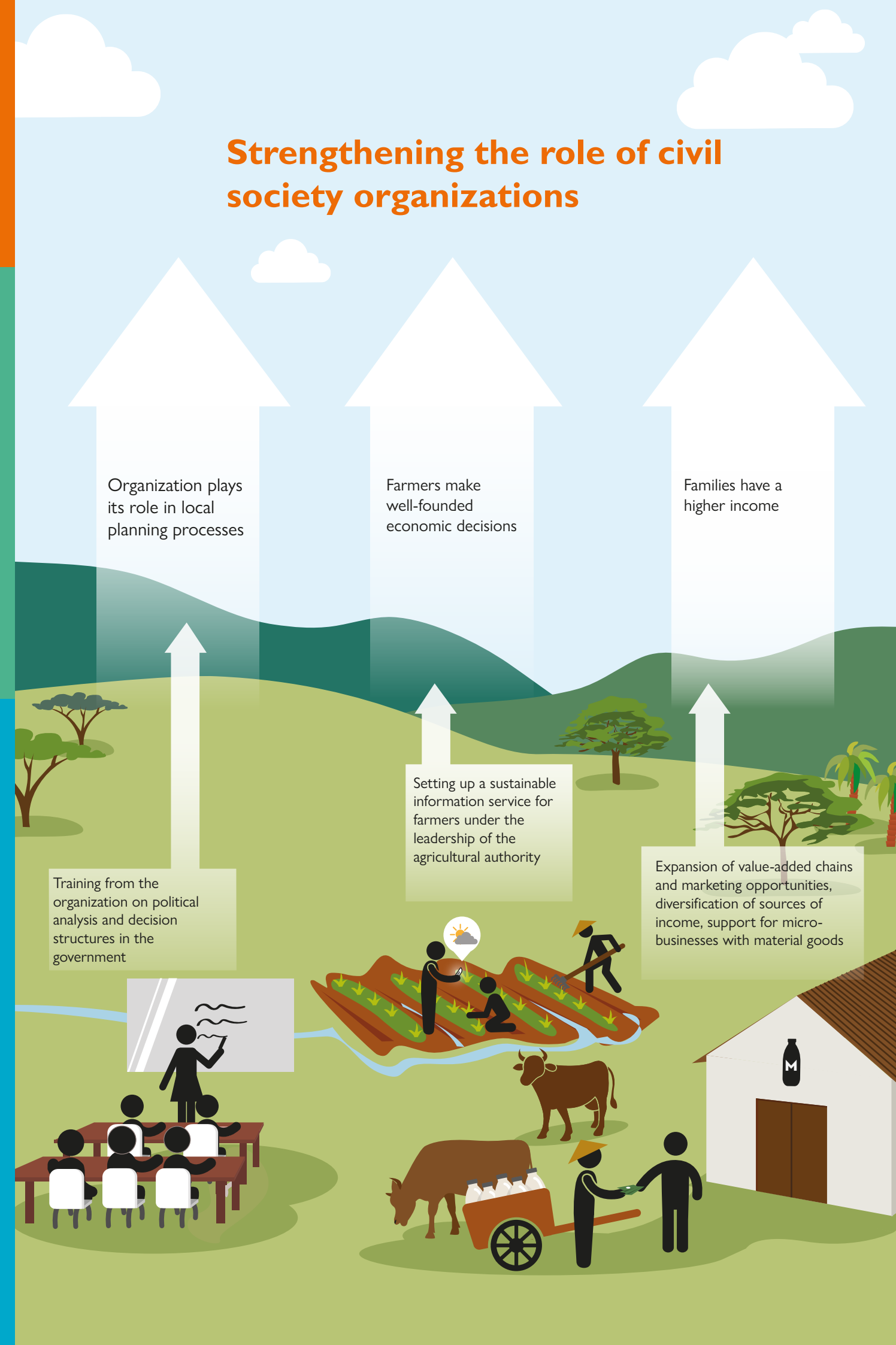
Sectors	Activities
Local advocacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthening the abilities of CSOs and local authorities for development planning in accordance with national guidelines Setting up a sustainable information service for small farmers under the leadership of the agricultural authority Setting up a cooperation system on a regional level to manage needs from the bottom up and guidelines from the top down
Economic development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expansion of value chain and marketing opportunities, expanding sources of income, support for micro-businesses, including material goods

Goal

Strengthening the role of civil society organizations

Impact

Activities



Approach for the evaluation

As part of the final evaluation, various qualitative and quantitative data collection and evaluation methods were combined with participatory learning and reflection methods. The aim of this was to strengthen local staff and partner organizations in reflection and evaluation methods. In order to assess the potential sustainability of the results, the qualitative surveying tool the “Tree of Change” was used. With this tool, the capacities of local NGOs and committees which play a decisive role in the sustainability of impacts can be measured (see also excursus on page 49).

Selected results



Strengthening of civil society organizations

Positive change	CSOs are actively engaging in local development processes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 80% of CSO members (the goal was 60%) have more knowledge to fulfill their role in local planning processes • Mechanism for CSO participation in planning processes in local governments was introduced
Self-assessment of CSOs using the Tree of Change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The CSOs have acquired 70% of the skills taught to them (start: 16%)

Sustainability: One of the strengths of the project is that it was incorporated into existing structures. Furthermore, staff from local organizations were able to further develop their capacities. With the exception of the newly founded producer groups, the project training sessions took place with existing groups. Using existing structures considerably increases the likelihood of sustainability. However, the CSOs displayed differences in their backgrounds, their reputation among the population and the motivation among their members. The potential for sustainable transformation in these groups therefore varied. Members of women’s groups were generally highly motivated and belonged to strong associations that were active on a national level. One restriction concerned the farmers’ associations, founded toward the end of the project. Many members said that the time in which they received support was too short. They were highly motivated to maintain the new structures and use their future potential, however, the likelihood of sustainability is low due to the insufficient transfer of skills.



Increasing incomes

Positive change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 20% of small farmers made their economic decisions at the end of the project on the basis of improved information (the goal was 40%) • An information service was set up to provide 2,058 farmers with information about agricultural topics (the goal was 2,000)
Example of the information service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some farmers used the information service, for example, to adjust when they plant their crops based on the weather forecast

Sustainability: The information service was only introduced toward the end of the project due to delays in the registration process. This impaired the impact of this component and makes its sustainability difficult to assess. There are also plans to provide farmers with Internet-based information services on weather, new cultivation methods and pest control, which would mean they have access to much more information. The government is prepared to support this, but there are still some open questions to clear up.

Increasing incomes

Positive change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dairy farmers have a steady income • Value chains have been expanded and sustainable marketing opportunities were created
Self-assessment of CSOs using the Tree of Change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At the end of the project, the dairy cooperatives were using more than 71% of the technical knowledge that they were taught (at the start, this figure was 2%)

Sustainability: In terms of the income-generating activities, the collaboration with the dairy cooperatives was extremely effective. The improved income situation also contributes to better nutrition among families, which has a direct influence on their resilience and on the well-being of children. The impacts also have great potential to be sustainable, since the dairy cooperatives could significantly enhance their technical knowledge and practical application. Another positive change was the breaking down of prejudices, and cultural norms surrounding people with disabilities were scrutinized. Because of this, participating members from local organizations have developed more understanding for people with disabilities and are now in a position to support them and include them in ongoing activities. However, the measures taken to improve the livelihoods of people with disabilities and other vulnerable persons were not sufficiently based on locally available resources (e.g. providing sewing machines), resulting in these measures unfortunately not being sustainable.

Overall, however, most of the economic activities triggered by the project were described by CSOs and project staff as sustainable and not at risk after the end of the project. This positive assessment was also confirmed in the evaluation.

Conclusions



- The stakeholders participating in the project have done a great number of things right to enable sustainability: Existing structures were used and expanded instead of building new ones; the skills of people involved in the region were systematically strengthened and their commitment and ownership in local development was increased; and a multi-layered project approach ensured that changes were effected at relevant levels.
- In summary, the evaluation report concludes that good foundations for sustainability have been laid in most of the measures for generating income. Small farming families having a better income situation and increased resilience also contributes to the improved well-being of children.
- According to the evaluation report, the inclusion of people with disabilities contributed toward raising awareness of the population in the project area and their acceptance on a permanent basis.
- Overall, the project was identified as the most important driver for the impacts that were achieved, nonetheless in cooperation with government institutions, authorities and stakeholders from the private sector.



- Regarding sustainability, two critical components could only be concluded once the project was coming to an end: the establishment of the CSO associations and the information system. In both cases it was not possible to bring these to the planned level of success.
- Further support for vulnerable families extending beyond the end of the project, e.g. by the CSOs creating sources of income, were assessed by the consultant as not being assured.
- According to the evaluation report, an effective exit strategy had been developed in the last year by project staff to ensure the project's sustainability. In order to strengthen the future role of the farmers' associations, we made contact with Chrysalis, an independent company that provides consultation and support for small and medium-sized companies to stimulate the country's economy. However, stakeholders and CSOs did not seem to be aware of the plan and were uncertain about the future. Local stakeholders have to take over the roles and responsibilities for the exit processes. Moreover, this affects the future of the local people. It is therefore surprising that so little room for participation was created at this stage.



Excursus: Tree of Change

The Tree of Change is a qualitative method which encourages participation and is used to learn more about the capacities of local organizations and the sustainability of project measures. The tool is based on the theory that the sustainability of the project impacts is strongly linked to local organizations and their capacities and resources.

The following aspects are identified and discussed:

- **Change: Trunk**
- **Impacts: Fruits**
- **Capacities and resources of the group who brought about the change: Roots**
- **Responsibilities of World Vision and how these can be taken over locally: Roots**
- **Threats to current impacts: Birds**
- **Group visions: Flowers**

The local organizations go through a process of self-reflection and self-assessment of their acquired capacities, allowing all participants to learn more about the positive changes: What impacts have they produced and which factors or stakeholders have contributed to this change? It also helps to identify the positive and negative factors for the sustainability of the impacts and thus assess their sustainability. Among other things, the tool works with images to make the meaning of the various components more comprehensible. It can also be used solely with images in the case of a low literacy rate of the participants.



World Vision should continue to strengthen the development of capacities and organizations. Furthermore it is crucial to involve people in the projects early on.

Rouguyatou Mint Sideyni

Interview with a local partner organization: What remains?

Rouguyatou Mint Sideyni, president of a network for early childhood development in Mauritania, reports on the network that was developed as part of an Area Development Program up to a few years ago.

Mrs. Sideyni, tell us about your network.

The Réseau de la Petite Enfance (Early Childhood Network) is a non-government, non-political and non-commercial network. Our goal is to push the region forward in terms of child protection and children's well-being. To date, the network has overseen 105 kindergartens being established. Each institution has an administration committee and a technical expert trained by the network who advises the volunteers and monitors the quality of the institution.

Who are the partners the network is working with?

The network is currently independent and maintains partnerships with UNICEF, Terre des Hommes, the German Development Agency for International Cooperation (GIZ), the project region and all partners active in the field of early childhood development. We are also a partner of the country's Ministry for Social Affairs, Children and Family Affairs, the Ministry of

Health, Education and Youth Development, as well as all government and non-government organizations.

Are there any organizational challenges for the network?

Yes. For example, we have logistics problems and need cars with four-wheel drive that can be driven over sand and the rough terrain present in many of the areas. Moreover, our current office that the education ministry provided for us to use is in need of being renovated. We have to take care of the renovations ourselves. In addition, there is the challenge of increasing the number of early learning centers even more because of the high demand.

What is needed to ensure long-term sustainability?

That would require the continuous availability of financial resources.

What advice would you give World Vision for future projects to enable the sustainability of positive changes early on?

World Vision should continue to strengthen the development of capacities and organizations. Furthermore it is crucial to involve people in the projects early on.



Between development cooperation and humanitarian aid

The following two project examples from Iraq and Jordan are at the interface of humanitarian aid, transitional aid and development cooperation. In complex states of permanent crisis, a chronological sequence from emergency aid and rehabilitation to development cooperation cannot always be followed. Providing emergency supplies to a great number of people must be ensured. At the same time, everyday supply structures need to be rebuilt. In this way, our support has to be flexible in order to switch back and forth between emergency aid, rehabilitation, and development cooperation, or sometimes these must even take place simultaneously. In addition it is important to increase the resilience of the population against new crises and setbacks. The project in Jordan is counteracting potential problems by taking in refugee families with a strong peacebuilding component. The project in Iraq was implemented in a fragile context with focus on emergency aid measures.

Project Example Jordan

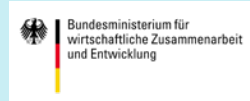


Strengthening Syrian and local children and young people in Jordan

Final evaluation

Beneficiaries:
7,712 people

Duration:
2015 to 2018



Financing: German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)

Project type:
Development cooperation



Initial situation

According to statistics from UNHCR, the United Nation's Refugee Agency, more than 676,000 Syrians have sought refuge in Jordan to date. Almost half (48%) of these are children. Around 83% of Syrian refugees have settled in urban areas, including Mafraq, Irbid, Amman and Zarqa. This led to growing challenges for the regions that have received them and for the Jordanian government to provide and share resources that are already scarce. Furthermore, the large number of refugees often led to tensions between Syrian and local children and young people.

Project goal and activities

The goal of the project, funded by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), was to strengthen the resilience of schoolchildren and teachers and reduce tensions between local inhabitants and refugees.

Sectors	Activities
Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Renovation of sanitary facilities and classrooms in schools Training teachers and staff from partner organizations to teach children about good practices in hygiene and nutrition
Peacebuilding and resilience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Founding peace clubs where children can learn better mutual understanding and recognition Children and young people were encouraged to get involved in their own interests independently Foundation and training of peace committees

The project was implemented between 2015 and 2018 in cooperation with World Vision Jordan and the partner organizations "The Royal Health Awareness Society (RHAS)" and "Madrasati".

Goal

Increased resilience of children and their communities

Impact

Improved learning environment

Children and young people are empowered to take part in self-directed initiatives and resolve conflicts without violence

Strengthening social bonds between refugees and host communities

Activities

Renovation of sanitary facilities and classrooms

Training sessions in hygiene and nutritional practices at schools

Foundation and training of community-based peace committees

Campaign for peace consolidation

Foundation of peace clubs working with children and young people

Holding cultural and sports events

Challenging conditions

Fewer Syrian children and young people took part in the project than initially planned due to the difficulty of the supply situation in Jordan at this time. In addition, official regulations forced many Syrian families to leave the region on the border with Syria.

Syrian children had to share their place at local schools with Jordanian children because there were not enough classrooms and teachers. This resulted in many schools offering morning lessons for local children and afternoon lessons for refugee children, which inevitably had a negative impact on activities aimed at bringing together children and young people of Syrian and Jordanian backgrounds. Project staff working on the project therefore added new schools to the program after one year. They were selected on the basis of how many Syrian children were enrolled at the school.

Approach for the evaluation

Quantitative and qualitative methods were applied in the evaluation carried out by an external team of consultants. Qualitatively, retrospective information on the initial situation was collected, since no usable data was available. In addition, two separate quantitative surveys for the two most relevant groups of beneficiaries – schoolchildren who attended the peace clubs and community-based peace committees, and the teachers – were carried out.

Selected results



Improved learning environment

- | | |
|------------------------|---|
| Positive change | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 76.8% of schoolchildren surveyed and 77.5% of teachers surveyed are happier with the renovated sanitary facilities than they were with the facilities before the start of the project• Almost 90% of the Jordanian children and almost 94% of the Syrian children say that their learning environment has improved |
|------------------------|---|

Sustainability: Despite the current high levels of satisfaction, a more negative outlook for the sustainability of the impacts is emerging: The sanitary facilities are not always cleaned properly or they have already been damaged. The facilities are also partly overburdened due to the arrival of many more Syrian refugee families. One reason given for this is that those responsible do not follow up regularly.



Hygiene and nutrition

- | | |
|------------------------|--|
| Positive change | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Change in hygiene awareness: Schoolchildren are now washing their hands before eating and after going to the toilet more frequently• Better eating habits: Schoolchildren are eating more healthily |
|------------------------|--|

Sustainability: The likelihood of sustainability in this component with the “Healthy School” approach is rated as high. According to the teachers surveyed, the improved way of life has become routine. Teachers have a genuine interest in health topics and report that they talk about good hygiene practices in their classes. This ensures a future transfer of knowledge.

Furthermore, the vast majority of teaching staff report that they have received a hygiene set (toothbrush, toothpaste, etc.), know how to use it, and are also actively using it at this time. The responsibilities in both cases are anchored locally.

Peacebuilding

- | | |
|--|--|
| Positive changes from the peace clubs | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Improved bond between Jordanian and Syrian children• Higher levels of self-confidence among children• Improved social relationships |
| Positive side effects | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Children and young people who were not at the beneficiary schools were also able to take part in the peace clubs. As such, the number of participants of the peace clubs was well over the target we had set• Cooperation between schools was enhanced• Children with disabilities were integrated very well |



Positive changes and sustainability: The project achieved meaningful results in terms of the bond between Jordanian and Syrian children. The survey from the team of consultants found that:

71% of all children surveyed say that the tensions between them have reduced.

Levels of self-confidence and social relationships have also increased among the children:

95% of active members in the peace clubs say that they are now more self-confident than before, they can present their ideas confidently, and they actively participate in group discussions.

96% of children who have actively taken part in the peace clubs say that they feel like part of a group of friends.

There was an unexpected positive impact when activities from different schools were joined together in one place during the holidays. This led to more interaction and positive experiences between children from different social backgrounds and between both boys and girls. The team of consultants also positively highlighted that children with disabilities were integrated very well, even though this was not explicitly planned. 18% of the project beneficiaries were children and young people with disabilities.

The peace clubs proved to be very effective at the end of the project. Unfortunately, this is not an indicator of the likelihood of sustainability, despite the peace clubs being anchored locally to schools and the capacities of those involved being strengthened. Further funding for the peace clubs is not yet secured and some are now taking place less frequently than during the project’s implementation. This reflects the particular challenge of the current context of the host communities which now have to distribute their resources among more people.



Peacebuilding

Positive change from the peace committee

- Relationships between Jordanian and Syrian children have improved
- Lots of children and young people are no longer afraid

Positive side effects

- The number of participants in the peace committees was six times as high as planned at the start

Positive changes and sustainability: The foundation and training of the peace committees as well as the communication between them was very successful. The peace committees are made up of adults, teachers and young people who promote the ideas and views of children and include them in decisions.

75% of all those surveyed stated that the relationships between Jordanian and Syrian children have improved.

There were some differences depending on age: Around 65% of schoolchildren aged under ten years old said that the relationships had improved, while 85% of children and young people aged eleven and older shared this view.

72% of children and young people currently no longer feel anxious at all and only 28% feel anxious often or occasionally.

In comparison, 58% of the children and young people in the survey said retrospectively that they had often felt anxious at the beginning of the project.

The impacts of the community-based peace committees are also very positive at the end of the project, but it is unlikely that they will be sustainable. Once again there is the problem of the lack of follow-up financing. Several peace committees have already stopped meeting regularly.

Conclusions



- The project was effective, efficient and relevant for its beneficiaries due to the activities that were carried out. Furthermore, all objectives for peacebuilding, strengthening social bonds, resilience, improving health and strengthening the partner organizations were achieved.

- Regarding nutrition and hygiene, the likelihood of the impacts being sustainable is high. In addition there is ownership, interest in continuing these activities and strengthened capacities.



- The likelihood of sustainability for some project impacts is doubtful. Some suggestions for improvement for this are named in the evaluation report. Although an exit strategy was in place, it did not sufficiently focus on the sustainability of the impacts. Moreover, there was a lack of local ownership in the exit strategy. The exit strategy should be planned together with local stakeholders at the start of the project and regularly monitored and adapted as necessary while the project is ongoing.



Project Example Iraq



Goal

Protection and strengthening of children affected by conflicts in Kirkuk

Final evaluation

Beneficiaries:
1,450 people

Duration:
2016 to 2017



Financing: German Federal Foreign Office (AA)

Project type:
Humanitarian Aid



Impact

Initial situation

War and subsequent conflicts have displaced more than 3.4 million Iraqis within its borders and more than 240,000 refugees from Syria have come to Iraq. Since 2014, World Vision has been supporting refugees, internally displaced persons and host communities. We are active in central Iraq and in the administrative districts of Erbil, Dohuk, Sulaymaniyah, Nineveh and Kirkuk in the Kurdistan region where we work to improve the situation for children and their families. Our relief efforts are concentrated on internally displaced persons and returnees living outside of camps and who are especially vulnerable and lacking adequate care. There is a lack of resources, the infrastructure is insufficient and the education systems are overloaded. Children in particular suffer from this precarious situation.

Project goal and activities

The goal of this project, funded by the German Federal Foreign Office (AA) to protect and strengthen children affected by conflicts, was to reduce the effects of displacement and interrupted schooling on children living in Kirkuk. A protective environment was to be created for children where they could receive psychosocial support as well as have opportunities to relax by playing.

Sectors	Activities
Education and child protection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Setting up child-friendly spaces • Training for teachers in child protection • Support of schools
Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improvements in access to water and sanitation

Approach for the evaluation

The evaluation was carried out at the end of the project. Two sets of data had also been collected at the start and in the middle of the project which were then used for comparison. A method mix with quantitative and qualitative elements was applied, with all relevant stakeholders and beneficiaries included: Children, parents, teachers, government representatives as well as other partner institutions.

Activities

Children affected by the conflict in Kirkuk are protected and have increased resilience



Selected results



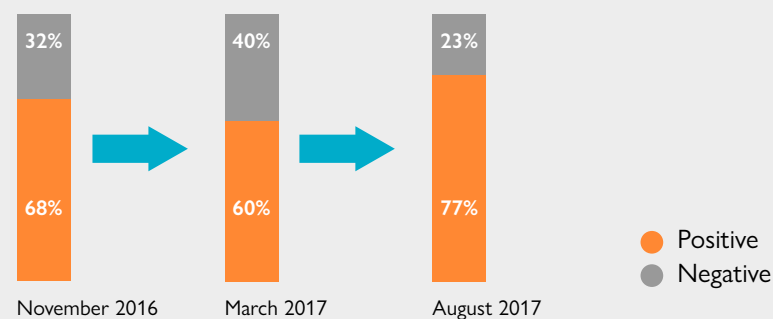
Education and child protection	
Positive impacts of the child-friendly spaces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved social bonds between Iraqi and Syrian children who came together for the first time in a safe environment Increased resilience and improved self-confidence of the children
Increased child protection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children had a better idea of what to do in the event of attacks and dangerous situations Social workers were able to talk to families about children's rights and needs

Connectedness: The child-friendly spaces had positive impacts. They create a good basis for the project's connectedness, meaning that relevant stakeholders can connect to the project activities, since people have been made aware of the issue of child protection and the team of consultants are optimistic that child protection has gained in importance in the longer term in the project region. The evaluators have made concrete recommendations about the exit strategy to further improve the connectedness:

- Sharing the out-of-school education initiative and its activities in the child-friendly spaces with the government education authorities and child protection partners in order to increase the likelihood of being transferred into the formal education system
- The child-friendly spaces should connect their work more with the formal local child protection structures and strengthen them. Closing these gaps would significantly increase connectedness.

Increased resilience among children

As well as their life skills, children's resilience was also assessed. They were asked how they deal with negative feelings such as anger and sadness. You can find more detailed information about the methodology and results in the project's evaluation report on pages 28 and 54: worldvision.de/access-education



Child protection and improved learning environments

Positive changes in local schools in Kirkuk

- Teachers from local schools are applying their newly acquired knowledge in the areas of child protection and psychological first aid. They have increased self-confidence for the needs of children and how to deal with them
- Hygiene and safety at schools were improved

Connectedness: The training of teachers is a very good measure to enable connectedness. The teachers are already taking their responsibility and passing on their knowledge to other teachers. Unfortunately, the transfer of knowledge in this case has not yet extended beyond the borders of each individual school. To increase the connectedness further, training should take place with government education authorities in future so that teachers from other schools may also benefit. Furthermore, the contents of child protection and psychological first aid should be anchored in teacher training in the long term. This would create a clear connection to long-term and sustainable development cooperation.

Conclusions

- Families and relevant stakeholders in the project area are increasingly aware of the issue of child protection.
- Knowledge on the topic of child protection and psychological first aid is being transferred from teachers to other teachers of local schools.
- There is room for improvement in this project in terms of World Vision's cooperation with government officials regarding child protection and education needs. Project measures in lengthy ongoing crises should also include elements of development cooperation such as the strengthening of ownership, cooperation with government partners and sustainability scenarios. There is potential for improvement here.



Conclusion: What have we learnt from the six evaluations on the topics of sustainability and connectedness?

A large part of the consultants did not analyze the sustainability and connectedness of impacts adequately, although a strong focus was placed on these aspects in the terms of references, clarification of the contract and evaluation design. There was a lack of systematic data collection and analyses of sustainability. We observed a failure between theory and practical application as well as a lack of understanding of the topic by the consultants.

Virtually no planning documents contained details of what sustainability or connectedness could mean in a specific project context. What can be realistically expected? And in what timeframe? Which measures to improve sustainability have to be planned? These questions should be discussed, agreed and planned in a participatory and realistic way with partners and target groups. Exit strategies should be monitored regularly and adapted where necessary.

In conclusion, the debate about sustainability and connectedness of our project work does not end here, but must be continued. We would like to use the following measures to strengthen our future planning, implementation and evaluation of the continuation of impacts:

- By creating a handout, we want to be able to better reflect the sustainability of impacts in planning documents and monitoring. Increased use should be made of approaches to reflect on cause-effect relationships (e.g. Theory of Change). In addition, the topic of sustainability should be specifically included in the handout.
- The joint development of exit strategies with target groups and partners should be promoted as part of planning processes. These should also be documented in a transparent manner.
- Our current handouts and approaches on the topics of sustainability as part of the terms of references and clarification of the contract (Inception Report) are being reworked.
- In terms of the effectiveness of these measures, we will also have an external assessment of the criterion sustainability in a future meta-evaluation (evaluation of the methodological quality of evaluations, see also chapter 8 – Meta-evaluation).



The best experience I had in the child-friendly space was that the teachers never shouted at me. They treated us like friends. I liked that.

Quote from a child

Chapter 6:

Online survey: What are employees at World Vision saying about sustainability?

In an online survey held in mid-2019, we wanted to know what employees at World Vision think about the topic of “Sustainability in Our Project Work”. The focus was on their experiences, views and the basic approach to this topic. The survey was anonymous, meaning that the names of those interviewed as well as the specific projects they are involved in were not collected.

Details on the survey

Since we operate in a field of conflicting priorities between project-specific requirements and complex contexts, it seemed essential to us to collect feedback from the project managers with regard to this topic. It must be emphasized that the results reflect subjective assessments by colleagues. Almost 80% of those interviewed have been working for World Vision for five years or longer. In total we received 73 fully completed questionnaires. Based on the current number of projects, we assume that the responses came from approximately 15 to 20 countries with three to four participants in each country. Even though this is not a representative survey, it nonetheless gives us an interesting insight into the views of our colleagues in the project areas.

What remains after a project has finished?

The result of the first question does not provide a clear picture, with 44% of respondents rating the probability of the project impacts continuing as very high, while 56% expressed doubts.

Plans for sustainability and transition

Sustainability and transitional plans are useful for facilitating sustainability. These plans for how project impacts can be sustained by local actors in the future are set out together with local groups. The survey clearly reflects that these sustainability or transitional plans are often present.

Here we found it noteworthy that around a third of those surveyed stated that sustainability and transitional plans exist, but were not, however, created together with local stakeholders. Approximately one third of those surveyed stated that there were no further stakeholders involved in drawing up sustainability plans.

It is crucial to increase people's knowledge on various topics in the project regions in order to be able to evaluate sustainability. For this, the needs and capacities of the local people should be analyzed before the start of the project. 92% of those surveyed stated that this was the case in their project.

According to project leaders, different methods of analysis were applied, for example stocktaking and needs assessment of partners in the projects. On this foundation, the project planning document was developed using stakeholder mapping, partner analysis and the prioritization of target groups. This includes an analysis of the stakeholders involved in terms of roles, power relations and influence on the goals proposed by the project.

Those surveyed assessed the effectiveness of the project-specific interventions for capacity development differently. Around half of the respondents stated that local actors were able to acquire new skills. However, the other half of survey participants responded that the planned impacts were only achieved in part, or not at all. Approximately half of those surveyed stated that what partners had learned was not sufficient to achieve positive impacts.

Local actors may indeed have been able to acquire new knowledge, but it does not seem to be enough to sustain the project impacts on a long-term basis on their own.

Which aspects increase the sustainability of project impacts?

We also asked our employees in charge of managing projects which important factors can encourage the sustainability of impacts. On the one hand, there are external factors which can hardly be influenced by the project work, for example an ongoing drought, violent conflicts or political instability. On the other hand, respondents mainly mentioned aspects that can be assigned to the keywords partnership and participation.

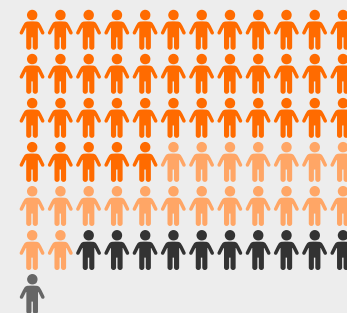
During planning and implementation, project staff must cooperate fully with key stakeholders – creating a partnership with government institutions, local organizations and other stakeholders.

How likely do you think it is that positive impacts of the project will be sustained after the project has ended?



- Very likely (**41 answers**)
- Somewhat likely (**32 answers**)
- Not likely at all (**0 answers**)

Was a specific plan set up and documented between the key stakeholders for how positive benefits from the project can be sustained in future?



- Specific plan is available, well documented and was set up with the key stakeholders. (**41 answers**)
- Specific plan is available and well documented, but was not set up with the key stakeholders. (**21 answers**)
- No specific plan available but we are optimistic that the project activities will promote sustainability. (**10 answers**)
- The project has no specific and documented plan for how project impacts are to be sustained. (**1 answer**)
- I don't know/I can't say. (**0 answers**)

How effective do you rate the interventions of the project for capacity building?



- Local actors have obtained the skills required and are greatly empowered in sustaining the project impacts on a long-term basis. (**3 answers**)
- Local actors have gained some knowledge, but it may not be enough. (**32 answers**)
- For various reasons, the interventions for capacity building have not had the intended effects. (**35 answers**)
- I do not know/I cannot say. (**2 answers**)

According to those interviewed, common goals and visions of everyone involved in a project should be formulated and active participation of the people in the project regions should be promoted. Employees also wish to improve coordination between different stakeholders, including local government institutions.

Project planning must meet the needs of its beneficiaries in the project regions and provide for their participation. Moreover, specific requirements such as appropriate contextualization, adjusting project activities to governmental guidelines, good root cause analysis, developing a suitable strategy as well as a conclusive project approach are especially important with regard to the sustainability of project impacts.

Transitional plan

Furthermore, those surveyed believe that a **well-designed transition plan is particularly important**. In accordance with the motto “Have the end in mind at the start”, this transitional plan should be created right at the start of the project in unity with local stakeholders and the project beneficiaries, creating clearly defined roles and responsibilities for everyone involved.

Ownership

Increasing the ownership of the people in the project areas aims to ensure that local resources such as available workers and means of production are used. This can create synergies that support the sustainable development of the region beyond the end of the project. This requires a strong social commitment and local partners being identified who are able to take over these responsibilities.

Advocacy work

Advocacy work can also promote sustainability and affects local, regional and national levels of government. The priorities here for families are, for example, the state services in the health care or education sectors, or formulating their own concerns with the help of representatives from civil society organizations and other stakeholders and influencing decisions.

Which aspects jeopardize the sustainability of project impacts?

A great deal of responses to the challenges that put the sustainability of project impacts at risk can be assigned to the topic of partnership. It may be the case that local stakeholders have different interests and opinions. Another challenge is the **high fluctuation of local stakeholders**. In terms of project design, the

survey respondents cited inflexible sector approaches, top-down approaches in planning and a lack of focus. Project models should be adapted to each context and expanded with a clear sustainability concept.

Furthermore, those surveyed stated that a lack of staff and financial resources led to decisions about project goals and strategies being compromised. This also included a decisive aspect that the knowledge of staff members who had left a project was not passed onto their successors.

Moreover, respondents described the cooperation with local authorities as a challenge, hereby listing corruption, bureaucracy, changes in political authorities and a lack of trust in public institutions as challenging for sustainable project impacts.

Result

56% of those interviewed expressed at least slight doubts as to whether positive impacts could be sustained after the project was completed. Creating conditions conducive to the sustainability of impacts does not seem to be an easy task in daily work. This is also confirmed in the evaluation reports.

As an organization we must continue to consider how we can support our staff with the simplest possible tools for drawing up plans for sustainability. It is of great importance that they are actively included in the processes. The administrative work is extremely high for our local World Vision staff members and partners. Due to the accountability toward supporters and donors, this will never be completely resolved, however, processes and formats should be as easy to use as possible. In addition, meaningful participation of local stakeholders is very time-consuming. Another interesting aspect is the challenge in working together with local stakeholders. How can we promote the skills of local stakeholders more effectively, thereby promoting the sustainability of impacts? The quality of training provided rests with us. Dealing with problems and uncertainties more effectively will remain a challenge.

But we are confident that in spite of the challenges in the projects, many local stakeholders are optimistic about the sustainability of impacts.





Chapter 7:

“Unlock Literacy” – Children learn to read

An impact evaluation of the project approach for the promotion of reading, “Unlock Literacy”, is presented in the following chapter. The project approach is implemented in many of World Vision’s educational projects and is therefore of paramount importance (see chapter 2). World Vision regularly evaluates its project approaches to check for improvements.

The international educational community has been working for decades in accordance with the second millennium development goal, the target of which is to ensure that all children have access to primary education. Fees for primary education have been abolished in many countries and more schools and opportunities for education have been created. However, it was repeatedly shown that access to primary education was not the only challenge. 250 million children could not read, despite half of them having attended school for at least four years.¹ The fact that a purely quantitative expansion of school educational opportunities was not enough led to the realization: **The quality of education needs to improve.** This is also underlined in the UN’s fourth sustainable development goal.

“Unlock Literacy” – a global success

To improve the quality of education, World Vision uses the “Unlock Literacy” project model² which is an evidence-based approach to increase the literacy rate

of children within the first three years of primary education. World Vision and Save The Children carried out a total of 14 impact evaluations³ in 13 countries on this approach between 2013 and 2017.⁴ According to the evaluations, the children who attended an intervention school performed better than the children in the comparison schools compared to the initial surveys.

The highest success rates in improving the literacy rate were seen among pupils in Bangladesh, Ghana, India and Ethiopia. In these countries, the values from the baseline to the final evaluation were vastly different from those of the comparison groups. The results in Burundi showed the least difference in the overall analysis.

Situation in Burundi

The security situation in Burundi is unstable due to domestic politics, the economic situation and the critical state of human rights. There are regularly politically motivated outbreaks, such as the violent unrest in the capital in 2017. Peace has since been restored, but new conflicts may arise at any time due to the country’s existing problems.⁵



“Unlock Literacy” in Cankuzo

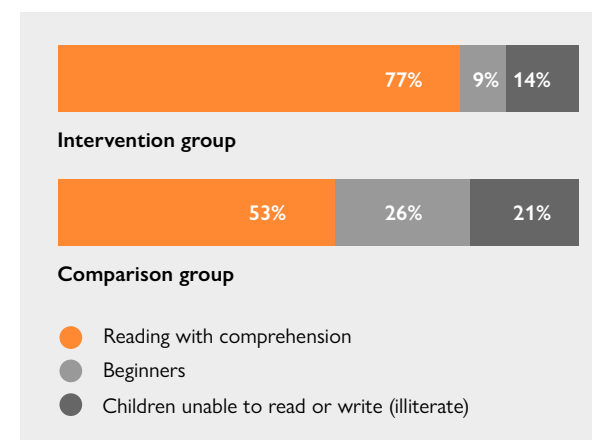
From 2012 to 2015, World Vision implemented the project approach “Unlock Literacy” in Cankuzo province in eastern Burundi, financed by private donors. Cankuzo is one of the poorest regions in Burundi. World Vision Germany extended the project by a further three years (2015–2018) due to the positive impacts it achieved.⁶ As part of this project, work was carried out in 51 schools in Cankuzo and the neighboring Kigamba region to improve schoolchildren’s reading skills. Due to low international comparison values, in February 2019 we took the opportunity to evaluate the project again at its end, paying particular attention to any factors which may have an influence on literacy.⁷ The evaluation with a quasi-experimental study design was carried out at 24 schools in the project regions of Cankuzo and Kigamba as well as a further twelve schools in the Mishiha region as a sample. We shall present our findings from this evaluation, both positive and negative, in the following.

Our goal: Children are able to read

The goal of the project was that children in the third grade are able to read and understand what they are reading. 935 children in the third grade took part in a survey about their social and family background as part of the evaluation. In addition, a reading assessment was done with the children at the beginning and at the end of the project. Based on the results we were able to determine the children’s literacy levels and overall understanding in their native language of Kirundi.⁸ It showed that the project was very successful and that the literacy levels of pupils in the intervention area had improved significantly. 77% of children in the intervention schools showed functional reading skills, compared to only 53% in the comparison schools. The children in the intervention schools were able to read more fluently and precisely and had a much better understanding of what they were reading.

Furthermore, we found that especially children who already had good basic knowledge achieved a much better result in the reading and comprehension test than previously. This is encouraging as it shows that children who show great dedication to learning can also achieve better comprehension skills. However, 23% of the children in the third grade in the intervention sites of Cankuzo and Kigamba either could not read at all or were categorized as beginners in terms of literacy.⁹ This figure mainly includes children who had already repeated a grade or who generally struggled with schoolwork. As only a few children were placed in the midfield, this could result in the negative

impression that the project was widening the gap between the pupils performing best and worst. As such, the project had the greatest impact on pupils with advanced skills. Hardly any impact was observed among struggling pupils with learning difficulties. An analysis of the living conditions showed that the pupils with the lowest socio-economic status in the intervention schools performed significantly better in the reading assessment than children with the lowest socio-economic status in the comparison schools. The assessment evaluated advanced reading skills, in particular language proficiency and reading comprehension. This is encouraging and shows that the “Unlock Literacy” project approach has a positive impact on children from economically poorer families in particular, and thus can reduce social inequalities. A gender analysis showed that there were no major differences between the sexes in terms of their literacy skills. However, we found that “Unlock Literacy” had a positive impact on girls in particular who have to do a lot of work at home. Girls at the intervention schools performed significantly better in almost every section than their contemporaries in the comparison schools.



Factors of influence on literacy

As well as in schools, World Vision also uses its project approach “Unlock Literacy” for children’s learning environments at home. On the one hand, the approach strengthens schools. On the other hand, playful activities are provided in the villages to help children learn to read. World Vision aims to create a culture of reading which makes reading fun for children in general so it is not seen simply as a subject at school. With regard to these different interventions, we wanted to know which of them had a particularly positive influence on improving children’s reading skills and which might not be so important.

Project activities in schools

The focus of the project activities in schools was on capacity building for teachers and at the same time enabling them to receive support from local education officers. To this end, school principals, 299 teachers of the first to third grades and 51 representatives of local education ministries received training. The nine-month training courses ran in addition to regular classes and covered educational and didactic content. Teachers were assisted in how to set up their classrooms in a way that is appropriate for children as well as creating teaching and learning material. World Vision also distributed workbooks and textbooks to schools. For example, reading corners were set up in classrooms so that children have the chance to read something from time to time. Furthermore, we focused on ensuring that teachers were supported by the local education authorities on a regular basis. The local education authorities were trained in how they can provide constructive feedback to teachers by regularly observing their lessons. The project did not undertake any actions involving infrastructure, such as renovations or construction of schools. Instead, the aim was to support members of existing school management committees. The committees are made up of representatives from the village and are responsible for the administration and maintenance of the schools.

Teachers in “Unlock Literacy”

We found that 70% of all teachers observed applied the learnings from the educational and didactic training courses. No significant differences between teachers in the intervention schools and the comparison schools were noted. Another surprising result was that there were hardly any differences between teachers who had received training and those who had not. Further investigations are required to explain this situation. However, we found that 51% of teachers evaluated in the intervention schools had not taken part in a training course. The main reason for this was the high fluctuation of teachers. Teachers were used to teach grades 1-8. If teachers for grades 1-3 were trained one year, they may find themselves teaching much higher grades the following year. As a result, only 30% of the teachers of grades 1-3 that were evaluated had completed a training course. It is therefore of utmost importance that the training courses are provided to all teachers in a school and not only for teachers of grades 1-3. In addition, a strategy to retain trained teachers who use the “Unlock Literacy” teaching methods is recommended.

Lack of support from education authorities

During the project there were changes in government regulations. Local education officers were no longer required to observe the work in schools to support and encourage individual teachers in schools. The project was unfortunately not adapted to match this change. As a result, the project goal of observing teachers at least once per quarter during a lesson and providing them with feedback afterward was unsuccessful. We recommend encouraging the school principals to take over this role.

Reading corners

A survey¹⁰ and an assessment of the schools showed that the only substantial difference between the intervention schools and the comparison schools was the small libraries, the teaching materials and the reading corners set up in the classrooms. The comparison schools did not have libraries at all, while 25% of schools in Cankuzo and 17% of schools in Kigamba had a library in their village. In addition, reading corners were set up in 33% of classrooms in the intervention schools (in the comparison schools this figure was 25%). The evaluation showed that around half of the schools had kept their reading corners in good condition. Sadly though, 70% of classrooms only had at most half of the essential books and teaching materials. All classrooms with learning material such as letter tables or learning posters belonged to the intervention schools; the classrooms in the comparison schools did not have any materials at all. Some schools which had received books and materials had locked these away as a precaution instead of setting up reading corners and training the teachers and children how to look after the books properly. One of the results from the impact analysis showed that the reading corners in the classrooms, some of which were very simply equipped, made a considerable contribution to the children’s ability to read better.

Better learning environment due to the school management committees

During the project it was the responsibility of the members of the school management committees to take care of improvements and maintenance of the children’s learning environments. For example, they were instructed to draw up a plan showing where the school’s shortcomings and needs lie and how these can be addressed. This plan was then due to be implemented throughout the school year with support from World Vision. But the project idea was not sufficiently put into practice. Only 58% of schools created an action plan, and even when there was a plan, in many cases the actions were not implemented.

Project interventions in the villages

In order to create opportunities for children to read outside the classrooms too, reading material had to be made accessible. To this end, in Burundi small libraries were set up and reading clubs were founded which met twice a week. In addition, parents and guardians were guided in how to support their children in learning to read, even if they themselves were illiterate. The idea was to encourage children to play and have fun while reading.

Reading clubs

Three reading clubs, each having two specially trained volunteers in charge, were launched in each intervention school. They dedicated up to four hours of their time per week to support children in their villages learning to read and demonstrated strong commitment to the clubs, despite there being no compensation or payment of any kind for them. Only 10% of the volunteers left the project during its three-year run. Happily, these reading clubs, launched in 2012, were still being held regularly after the project's end in 2015.

World Vision provided a large amount of support during the first project cycle. This seemed to rouse and build up people's attitudes and abilities, leading to a very high level of motivation for the project. In contrast to those from the first three years of the project, the reading clubs in the second project cycle appeared to have less of a sustainable effect, such that several reading clubs were only taking place at irregular intervals. We found that the support from World Vision was not as good in the second project cycle as it was in the first. Moreover, the communication from World Vision to the beneficiaries about the course and length of the project was unsatisfactory, which had a negative impact on the sustainability of the reading clubs.

Preschool-age children are also joining in

The project approach had the aim of supporting children in grades 1–3 in learning to read outside of school. However, we found that lots of children wanted to join in who had not yet started school. As a result, 1,740 preschool-age children also took part in the reading clubs. This encouragement in early childhood also has a very positive influence on their education and learning. In addition, children who generally did not go to school also came to the clubs. Unfortunately, only about a third of schoolchildren of grades 1–3 took part in the reading clubs, whereas we were

actually aiming for 75%. Most schools in this region run two shifts (morning and afternoon), but since the reading clubs were only on offer in the afternoons, this meant that the children who only had lessons in the afternoon could not take part, even though a great number wanted to.

“Reading buddies”

supporting each other in learning to read

82% of children said that they have a reading buddy. 77% of them said that they have already met up with their reading buddy this week to read. The idea of reading buddies also comes from the “Unlock Literacy” approach to promote reading outside of school. The children in the project area we spoke to had met up with their reading buddy an average of two to three times in the last week.

Not enough books

The project had a very impressive mechanism with regard to creating books. The work of the people in Burundi was very impressive with the creation of 145 new book titles. A total of 12,865 books were provided in the small libraries which had been founded in villages or in the reading clubs themselves. However, the aim was for the small libraries to have at least 100 different book titles and two copies of each book, meaning, given the number of libraries in the project area, there should have been at least 30,600 books. In total there were just 12,865 books. This lack of books attracted criticism from all sides and the desire for more options was expressed. More books for a wider range of age groups were also requested. Due to the demand for more reading options, we recommend printing and distributing books in much larger quantities. In doing so, the requirements of having at least 100 book titles and two copies of each book should be fulfilled.

Parents supporting their children

494 parents and guardians were trained in how to support their children in learning to read. The training course contained seven modules which ran over seven months. Participants were given practical tips, such as sitting down with their children as they do their homework and finding out about their children's everyday school routine. In addition, they were guided in how to set up a comfortable reading corner or space at home for their children so they can concentrate when doing their homework. The evaluation showed that parents and guardians in the project area supported their children more than parents and guardians in the comparison area. In Cankuzo there was a

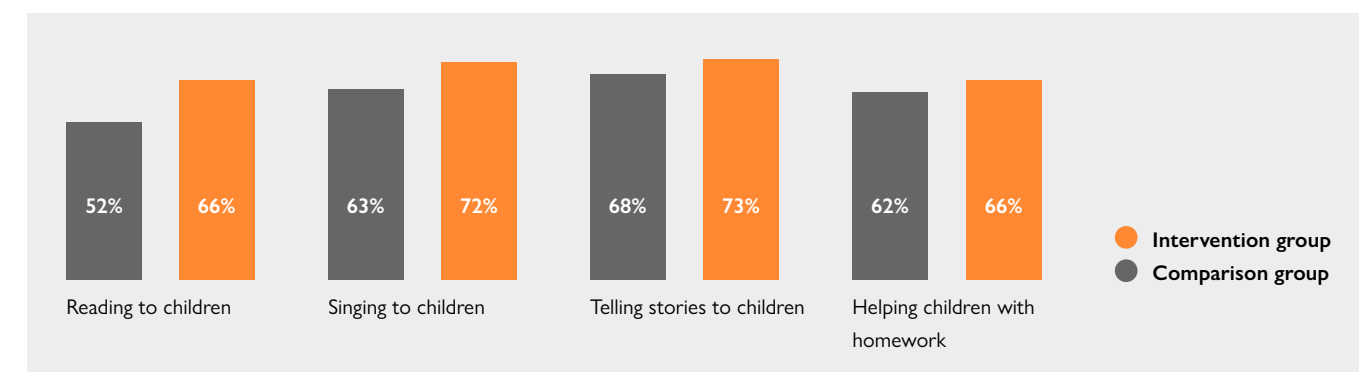


considerable difference in this respect compared with the start of the project. In Kigamba the only difference was in the supervision of homework.

Overall, we sadly found that only 3% of parents and guardians were trained in how to support their children in learning to read. The standard set out in “Unlock Literacy” states that at least 30% of parents and guardians should be trained in this during the project. As such, we have to question how effective this out-of-school component of the project really was. The parents and guardians who had been trained did show more self-confidence and optimism in being able to support their children in their learning. 13% of parents and guardians from the comparison group estimated that they did not have the skills to support their children with learning, and 22% displayed great uncertainty. These values were comparatively significantly lower than those of the intervention group. Nevertheless, the figure of 15% is also surprising, as these parents and guardians were supported and guided for months in this.

Success story: From banana wine to reading club

Jean Claude is a father of two small children and has been running a reading club for seven years. When he first heard about the idea for a reading club and the training for prospective reading club leaders, he immediately wanted to be part of it. At this time he brewed banana wine to provide for his family. The idea of the reading club convinced him and he gave up brewing so that the hut could be used for a reading club. With great conviction and his own means he later even built a small house for the club. He burnt the bricks for it and World Vision provided the corrugated iron. Since then, the reading club meets several times a week and is run by him and his wife. The little house is always full of enthusiastic children. Here, even tiny infants begin reading and writing a few letters. Jean Claude regularly visits the World Vision office to ask if there are any new books. The children of his reading club often know the books off by heart because they have read them so many times. Jean Claude himself only went to school up to the eighth grade, but firmly believes in





the positive impact of education. He therefore wants to give the children in his village a better future.

Result

The evaluation showed a positive impact as the children in the project were able to read at a better level. This impact was achieved despite individual project components not being implemented sufficiently. In addition, the out-of-school interventions were sadly not used very much in comparison, although they were highly appreciated according to the surveys of the village communities.

The idea that out-of-school reading activities in the villages have a positive influence on the reading abilities of children was confirmed. The analysis showed that children who regularly participated in out-of-school reading activities achieved better results in reading.

We can therefore conclude that the results in the project in Burundi would have been even better if all measures had been implemented correctly. In Burundi, however, the participation in out-of-school activities was more than 50% lower than the average for “Unlock Literacy” interventions. Here it can be said that participation in out-of-school reading activities in particular had a considerable influence on the results of the children's reading tests. The greater the children's participation in out-of-school activities to promote reading abilities, the better they performed in the reading tests. The comparatively small participation of children in out-of-school activities was therefore an important reason for why Burundi was the weakest-performing country compared with other countries.

The project approach was focused on improving literacy among children. However, this did not fully

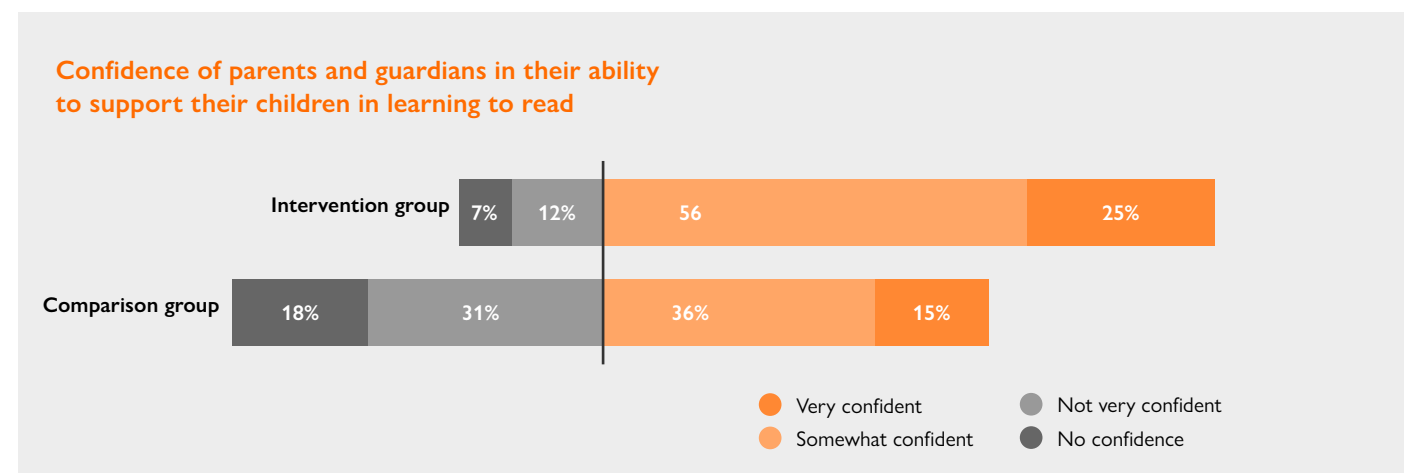
examine the situation prevailing in the educational institutions. The learning environment also had a major influence on how well the children were able to learn. For example, children who went to a school which had electricity were able to read more precisely, more fluently, and demonstrated a better understanding than schoolchildren at schools without electricity, and children at schools with access to drinking water had better reading results than those at schools without the same access. We therefore recommend ensuring for our work in future that we work comprehensively with schools, whereby school management committees are intensively involved and play an active role. In addition, it is crucial that there is plenty of varied teaching and learning material available, both in schools and in the villages. However, these should not only be distributed, but must be backed up by concepts of sustainability.

Anick

We introduced Anick on pages 50 and 51 of the 2nd impact report. In February 2019 we visited Anick again (see image above and to the right) to see how she was and what she was getting up to. She is now a senior in school and her parents are very proud of her.

You can see Anick and many others in the short video about “Unlock Literacy” available at:

youtu.be/nMQTO1_A1VM





Chapter 8:

Assessment of the quality of evaluations executed by CEval since 2014 – are there any trends?

In 2014, 2016 and 2018 we commissioned the Center for Evaluation (CEval) to analyze the quality of 34 (2014), 29 (2016) and 33 (2018) evaluation reports. These meta-evaluations assess the methodological quality of evaluation reports. The analysis therefore does not say anything about how “successful” the projects are, but rather how meaningful the evaluation reports are. This is important for us because evaluations form the basis for our impact communication and the learning, control and reflection processes at our local partner organizations.

Approximately two thirds of the evaluations are carried out by external consultants commissioned by World Vision. They are generally selected and contracted by the World Vision country offices. An independent evaluation is important to us for final evaluations and projects financed by public funds in particular.

Now that the results regarding the quality of a total of 96 evaluations over a period of six years are available, we were interested to see whether any trends could be identified. Have any aspects improved or worsened? Are any differences noticeable depending on the source of funding, e.g. private or public funds? The findings are intended to help us continue to improve the quality of evaluations.

The following assessment dimensions were considered in each of the meta-evaluations conducted so far:

- Voice and inclusion
- Transparency
- Methodology
- Triangulation
- Contribution to change
- Satisfying information requirements

In 2018 we also added the assessment dimension **sustainability** – the durability of impacts – for the first time.

Each of the dimensions listed is made up of multiple sub-criteria. Every sub-criterion and every dimension was rated in a two-stage review process. This resulted in the following categories:

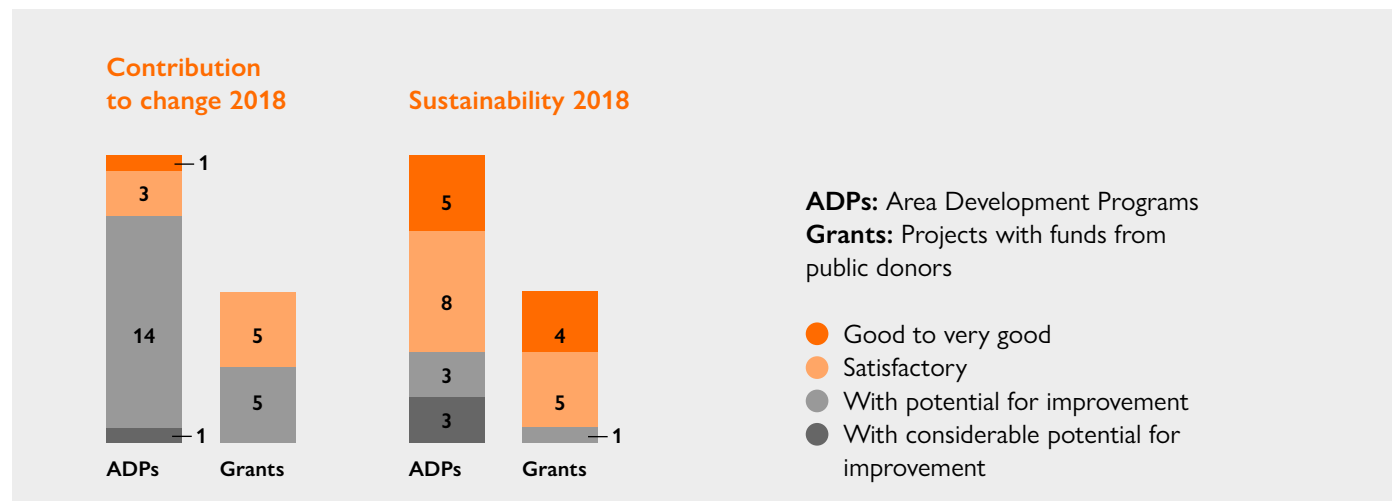
- With considerable potential for improvement
- With potential for improvement
- Satisfactory
- Good and very good

Quality of evaluations

Situation: Regardless of the source of funding, the methodological quality of evaluations has not improved overall between 2016 and 2018 and in some dimensions has even deteriorated. In the timeframe from 2016 to 2017, barely 33% of evaluations fulfilled the minimum standards in terms of the identification of the project contribution. In 2015 to 2016 this figure was 52%. The development of the dimensions of methodology and triangulation is similar. Only transparency did improve. On a positive note, 64% of evaluation reports fulfill the minimum standards in terms of the assessment of sustainability. 30% of the reports from 2018 were rated as being good to very good.

64% of the evaluation reports fulfill the minimum standards in the sustainability dimension.

Analysis: Most of the evaluations are commissioned by the World Vision country offices. Following the last meta-evaluations we have placed more emphasis on the tendering process and defining methodological expectations more clearly within the terms of references. We are also providing more intensive support for the process of methodological design of evaluations and have drawn up checklists. Nevertheless, our experience was that the methodological skills of many consultants did not match our requirements.



Evaluations financed by public vs. private funds

Situation: It is striking that the 2018 evaluation reports financed with public funds more often met the minimum standards in the dimensions of identification of a project's contribution to change, transparency and sustainability than the evaluations of the sponsorship projects.

In terms of trends, the quality of project evaluations financed by public funds has improved slightly in both dimensions since 2015. A very positive outcome is that 95% of evaluations fulfilled the minimum standards in the dimension of contribution to change. While overall a relatively large number of evaluations analyze sustainability methodologically as good to very good, three evaluations of sponsorship projects were rated as insufficient.

95% of evaluations fulfilled the minimum standards in the dimension of contribution to change.

Analysis: The qualitative differences between projects financed by public and private funds can be partially explained by a change in World Vision's project management standards since 2016 for private funds. In order to relieve the local World Vision offices, the World Vision partnership changed its methodological requirements for evaluations. At the same time there are higher budgets, and therefore also more experienced consultants or indeed whole teams of reviewers, available for evaluations financed by public funds. This also seems to be reflected in the quality of the evaluations. In some evaluations, the increased efforts for better sustainability analyzing since the last impact report also have a methodological effect.

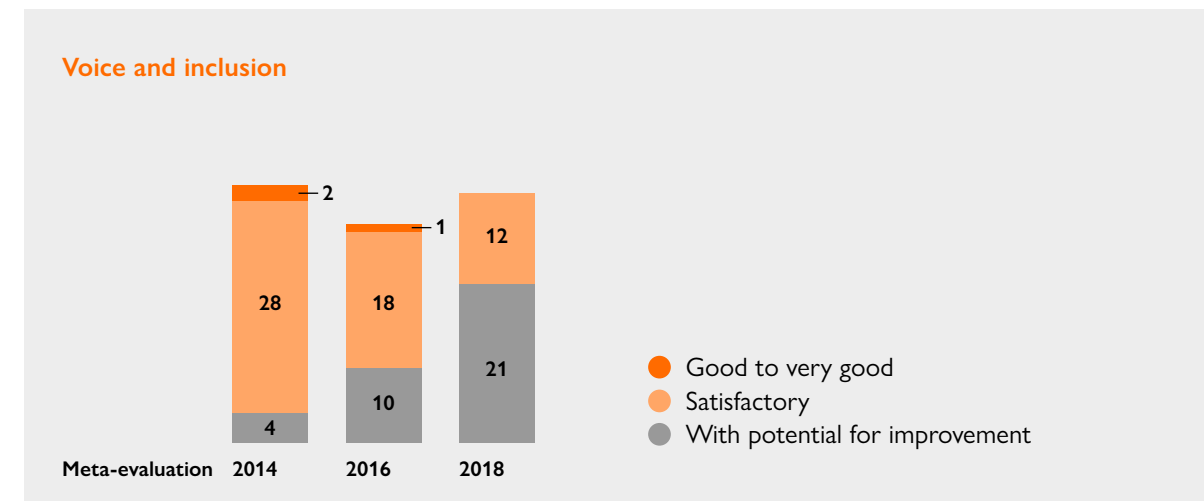
Voice and inclusion in sponsorship programs

Situation: We would like to highlight something in particular that features in all evaluation reports regardless of how they are financed. The assessment dimension of voice and inclusion has been undergoing negative development since 2014. While in 2014 82% of reports were still rated as "satisfactory" in this field, in 2016 this figure was down to 62%, and in 2018 it was only 36%. Furthermore, the number of reports "with considerable potential for improvement" in the field of voice and inclusion increased from 12% to 64%. When breaking down these results by their type of project funding in more detail, however, it became apparent that only the quality of evaluations of programs financed by private funds had worsened.

Analysis: These changes can be partly explained by the aforementioned strategic transitional phase in the World Vision partnership. On the other hand, there is a similar trend for project financed by public funds. We have to conduct further analyses to what extent this is due to the terms of reference with the consultants or how we need to emphasize this more methodically in the conceptualization of evaluations.

Conclusions and recommendations

Overall it is good news that almost all our projects are being evaluated. However, only a small amount of the evaluations were rated as being good to very good in the various dimensions. This is especially relevant in the central aspects of identification of a project's contribution to change and voice and inclusion. It was previously not always easy to find qualified and reliable reviewers in our project countries.



It must be remembered that evaluations are also expensive and time-consuming processes. Each project must be assessed individually to see if an evaluation is appropriate and if so, at what cost. While there are sufficient resources available for the evaluation of a three million Euro project funded by the European Union, for a small project the cost and benefit must be weighed up carefully.

One positive trend is the improvement in the general quality of the evaluations of projects financed by public funds, which nowadays form a large part of our projects as a whole. At the same time, it is clear to see that the quality of evaluations, regardless of the way they are financed, must continue to improve. Our goal should be that all evaluations fulfill the minimum standards that have been set.

Evaluation process

- Guidelines, checklists, formats for contract clarification, evaluation designs (inception report) and evaluation reports and their assessment should be examined for their usefulness and added to as necessary.
- Develop a reviewer pool of evaluators to encourage long-term collaboration with reviewers.
- Develop evaluation skills of local staff and support local reviewers with the "learning by doing" approach with German and/or international partner evaluators.

Learn from evaluations

- Reflect on evaluations and their recommendations more systematically at World Vision Germany and implement conclusions consistently.

Resources

- Group together resources for evaluations of privately financed projects. Only evaluate a strategic selection of projects instead of all projects to increase the quality of individual evaluations.

Glossary

Standard indicators of World Vision

Consistent cross-project indicators for measuring the targets of children's well-being in the sectors of health, nutrition, education, child protection and participation. With these standard indicators, World Vision wants to survey its overall objective, the well-being of children, across the whole organization and, where possible, summarize results at country or regional level.

Project approaches

For each area of work (child protection, education, health, nutrition, economic development and water and hygiene), World Vision has multiple systematic approaches which have been proved to work in international cooperation. These include targeted interventions, tools and support for planning and implementing and can be adapted to each context.

Impact

"Impacts" refer to all the intended or unintended, positive or negative, medium-term and long-term effects triggered by the aid and project interventions taken.

Impact orientation

This means the focus of the project planning and management as well as the evaluation based on the impacts. Impact orientation means reflecting on the impacts of a project from the very start together with partners and target groups and, on an organizational level, promoting learning from monitoring and evaluation processes.

Area Development Programs

Long-term (ten to twelve years) development projects that are financed by sponsorship funds. These generally cover multiple sectors so that we can work to improve the overall well-being of children.

Evaluation

"Evaluations" refer to the systematic collection, analysis and assessment of information in a project area based on criteria that can be objectively verified. We retrieve this information with the use of various sociological methods.

Baseline

Surveying the indicators of a project immediately before or at the start of a project in order to determine the initial situation.

Ex-post evaluation

This takes place after a project has finished (at World Vision this is generally after at least one to two years) and focuses on the assessment of sustainability and long-term impacts.

Meta-evaluation

Evaluations of multiple evaluations to assess their quality and usefulness (this can also include other evaluation standards).

Mix of methods

Application of qualitative data collection (e.g. group or expert interviews, ranking methods), quantitative methods (e.g. surveys of the families), and document analyses. This mix of methods helps to even out the weaknesses of individual methods and consider the project from various perspectives.

Theory of change

A model that shows (often in the form of a diagram) how desired effects are to be achieved. It contains assumptions about causal relationships that clarify what has to happen between the measures and the desired impact.

Indicator

This describes a measurable variable for reflecting changes. Indicators can refer to both quantitative and qualitative data.

Stakeholders

Individuals, groups, civil society organizations or state institutions who have a direct or indirect interest in the project or its evaluation.

DAC criteria

Five criteria for evaluating development projects: Relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impacts and sustainability. These were set out in 1991 from the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of the OECD and have since been widely applied in international contexts.

Relevance (DAC criterion)

This refers to what extent the goals of a development project match the needs of the target group and the context, the priorities and targets of the donor organization and partners as well as the global development goals.

Effectiveness (DAC criterion)

This compares and contrasts the planned goals and those that were achieved (target-performance comparison).

Efficiency (DAC criterion)

This correlates the costs of a measure to its effects and checks the potential for optimization.

Impacts (DAC criterion)

This checks if and to what extent the development interventions contribute to achieving the overall intended goals. It also examines if there are any unintended positive and negative impacts and if so, what these are.

Sustainability (DAC criterion)

This includes both the estimation of whether positive impacts that were achieved will continue after the interventions have been finished as well as the intertwining relationship of social, economic and ecological impacts.

Target group

Individuals, groups, institutions and organizations who are the intended beneficiaries of the impacts.

End notes

Chapter 1:

- 1 For more information please refer to the [Annual Report 2018](#)
- 2 For explanatory notes on the World Vision standard indicators please refer to the 2nd impact report, pp. 6–7
- 3 <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/indicators/indicators-list/>

Chapter 3:

- 1 <https://corehumanitarianstandard.org/the-standard>
- 2 Development Assistance Committee for the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). The evaluation criteria have been adjusted for humanitarian aid: Appropriateness/relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impacts, connectedness, coverage, coherence and coordination.
- 3 The role and process of the cooperation with partners is presented in greater detail in the following publication: worldvision.de/local-partnering
- 4 The Development Programme Approach (DPA) for the participation of local stakeholders is explained in a handbook for the development cooperation: worldvision.de/handbook-dpa
- 5 On page 8 of the publication, the Fragile Context Programme Approach (FCPA) of the World Vision partnership is presented as an illustration: worldvision.de/fcpa
- 6 Making Sense of Turbulant Contexts (MSTC) or Integrating Peacebuilding & Conflict Sensitivity (I-Pacs) are the most common analysis methods used by World Vision for this. See also: worldvision.de/mstc
- 7 In the Development Programme Approach of World Vision, processes for the involvement of target groups and stakeholders in all steps of the project management are presented: worldvision.de/handbook-dpa
- 8 DAC: Development Assistance Committee of the OECD: Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, see: <https://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/dacriteriaforevaluatingdevelopmentassistance.htm>
- 9 In this example, malnourishment refers to both acute (wasting) and chronic (stunting) malnourishment.
- 10 Evaluation criteria in humanitarian aid (EHA): worldvision.de/eha

Chapter 4:

- 1 worldvision.de/metaevaluation-2017

Chapter 5:

- 1 Cf. OECD-DAC (2000) DAC Criteria for Evaluating Development Assistance. Paris: OECD
- 2 Cf. OECD-DAC (1999) Guidance for Evaluating Humanitarian Assistance in Complex Emergencies and Alnap (2006) Evaluating humanitarian action using the OECD-DAC criteria
- 3 You can find the complete evaluation reports online at worldvision.de/evaluationsberichte
- 4 See also the World Vision Annual Report 2017, p. 44
- 5 See also: worldvision.de/cva
- 6 You can find the complete evaluation reports online at worldvision.de/evaluationsberichte
- 7 The community-based peace committees are made up of adults, teaching staff and young people who promote the ideas and views of children and include them in decisions that concern them.

Chapter 7:

- 1 UNESCO World Education Report 2014
- 2 This was called “Literacy Boost” in its first few years. It was developed by Save The Children and introduced in cooperation with World Vision. Its approach was presented in the 2nd Impact Report on pages 48–51. You can find further information about the project approach on our website at: worldvision.de/unlock-literacy
- 3 20–26 children were selected in each school for this (with equal numbers of boys and girls). The number of schools varied between 26 and 80 in the different countries. Half of the schools were intervention schools and the other half were comparison schools.
- 4 Link to the multi-country analysis: <https://public.tableau.com/profile/billi.shaner#!/vizhome/WVEffectSizesDashboard/WVStory>
- 5 German Federal Foreign Office (AA) (as of 31.10.2019)
- 6 Rosenkranz, Jonason, Kajangwa (2014): Literacy Boost Burundi Endline Report. World Vision International and Save the Children.
- 7 Multiple methods were applied to retrieve qualitative and quantitative statements: Project document review, secondary data review of provincial education data, key informant interviews, parent survey, focus groups discussions, literacy assessment, school survey, classroom lesson observations.
- 8 The test included recognizing letters and words and checking the fluency and comprehension of reading.
- 9 “Beginner reader” refers to schoolchildren who can read a passage that is appropriate for their age independently but answer less than 80% of the comprehension questions correctly.
- 10 In all 36 schools the school principals had to fill out a questionnaire.





World Vision
ZUKUNFT FÜR KINDER

World Vision Deutschland e. V.
Am Zollstock 2-4 · 61381 Friedrichsdorf
phone: +49 6172 763-0
info@worldvision.de

Berlin office
Luisenstraße 41 · 10117 Berlin

worldvision.de



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