



World Vision's Faith and Development Program, Kurdish Region of Iraq (KRI)

A review of two pilot projects for children and young people

- Youth Empowerment
- Celebrating Families

October 2017

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I. Introduction

Since 2014, World Vision has operated a humanitarian response programme supporting internally displaced Iraqi families in the Kurdish Region of Iraq (KRI). Within this, WV KRI has been implementing two interdependent ‘pilot’ projects for working with displaced communities through faith networks, the Youth Empowerment Project and the Celebrating Families project.

- **Youth Empowerment (CREF)** began in July 2016, as a localised project working through five Christian churches in Erbil (KRI’s capital and most populous city) to support Christian youth displaced by ISIS. A refreshed phase of programming from February to September 2017 saw the project expand into more IDP camps in Erbil and begin church-based partnerships in Sulaymaniyah and Dohuk.
- **Celebrating Families** used a model from World Vision’s global child protection strategy, using faith as a starting point for discussions among Christian parents on their role in ensuring the wellbeing and happiness of their children. While Celebrating Families has been well tested in many different contexts, this is the first time it has implemented among communities recently displaced by conflict.

Implementing together, these projects aimed to support spiritual needs and nurture of young people and their parents, and build a base of experience and learning within the context of KRI that could contribute to the impact of an ongoing Faith and Development program.

This report brings three components of Faith and Development in KRI together: firstly, project lessons and outcomes from Youth Empowerment and Celebrating Families; secondly, research done over three time points with young people and parents to understand whether deeper change in relationships and resilience for young people had yet occurred; thirdly, a survey taking place towards the end of the project phases to set a formal baseline of spiritual and family assets against which Faith and Development efforts could be monitored.

Displacement patterns ¹	
Displaced across Iraq	4.2 million
Relocating to camps	1.1 million
Relocating to communities	3.1 million
Displaced or relocating in KRI	Over 1 million
Christians displaced and relocating in KRI	Up to 200,000 ²

Situation analysis; displaced Christians in KRI

The protracted Syria and Iraq crisis is one of the most complex in the world, and is the only situation that has warranted implementation of two concurrent Interagency Standing Committee (IASC) Level Three crises. According to UN OCHA, over four million Iraqis and 245,000 Syrians are displaced within Iraq, with an additional 11 million in need. More than one million Internally Displaced People (IDPs) and refugees are in the

Kurdistan Region of Iraq (KRI)³. Three years of continuous conflict and economic stagnation have impacted nearly every aspect of Iraqi society.

Displacement which brings people of different ethnicity or religion into close proximity has particular implications for social cohesion and humanitarian protection. Up to 200,000 Christians were displaced by Daesh occupation in Ninewa from 2014 onwards. Seeking areas tolerant of their minority faith, many fled to camps in Erbil set up by Christian church affiliates. These families have enjoyed relative safety within the camps, but have experienced discrimination and social tensions in their interactions with other communities, affecting their mobility, employment opportunities and chances of schooling or integration for their children. Young people growing up in camp communities have limited opportunity for quality education, or to engage productively in the workforce or their communities. Many have also experienced or witnessed grave human rights abuses under occupation, including public executions and rape of family members⁴. For this age group, there has been an urgent and unmet need for psychosocial support, life skills and confidence-building.

¹ Humanitarian Needs Overview (HNO), Iraq,

² REACH data August 2014, http://www.reachresourcecentre.info/system/files/resource-documents/iraq_idp_crisis_displacement_overview_3-18august2014_0.pdf

³ <https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/en/operations/iraq/document/2017-iraq-humanitarian-response-plan>

⁴ Iraq Child Protection Sub-Cluster secondary data review, December 2016: https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/2016_12_12_iraq_cpsc_sdr_narrative_ninewa.pdf

2. Program overview

World Vision is in the process of developing a strategic Faith and Development program for KRI. It aims to empower local religious bodies to care for the needs of children and youth as agents of change in their communities. Faith and Development recognizes that all people are affected by their environments physically, psychologically, economically, politically and relationally as well as spiritually, and understands that religion as a cultural asset comes under stress in conflict and displacement. Most work taking place through Faith and Development in KRI to date is partnering with Christian churches and faith leaders, funded through WVUS' Church Refugee Engagement Fund (CREF). However, the full definition of Faith and Development in KRI includes all faiths, so long as it is appropriate and effective for WV to partner. WV KRI will continue to maximise the ways in which this funding can be used to best serve the Christian community and its outreach to those of other faiths.

Faith and Development in KRI is unique among World Vision's initiatives globally because of the complexity of its setting. Not only Christians, but also church leaders and bodies, are living in crisis situations and facing tensions and divisions. A tenet of the program has been engaging with church leaders to support the re-establishment of congregations in flux; all aspects of the program are delivered in partnership with and through church structures.

- **Youth Empowerment (two phases, between July 2016 and September 2017)**

The Youth Empowerment Project worked with young people aged between 12 and 26 living in IDP camps or church shelters in Erbil, Duhok and Kirkuk, as well as those who had moved to houses and are living within host communities. In total, 463 young people have participated in the project to date. Youth Empowerment operated through volunteers, including displaced people and host community members, who taught and motivated young people through courses in leadership and child rights, as well as activities requested by project participants: music, drama, craft, computer skills, beauty skills and the English language. The volunteers also met with family members, around once a week, to discuss the project and whether it was meeting family needs. Priests and nuns mentored through informal sessions with young people, and professional psychosocial care and guidance was available through paid staff: two social workers and a psychologist.

Indicators, Youth Empowerment

Goal: Empowered communities and churches jointly celebrate youth resilience and leadership

Outcome 1: Empowered local churches meet IDP and vulnerable host community youth transformation needs

Outcome 2: IDP youth promote positive changes in their own lives and lives of their communities in partnership with churches.

- **Celebrating Families (December 2016 – current)**

World Vision developed the Celebrating Families tool from 2011 to support parents and caregivers to create a family and community environment that fostered children's spiritual development and overall well-being. Emphasising the role of parents, Celebrating Families has given 221 participants the opportunity to take part in simple activities that promote self-reflection and enhanced knowledge and understanding about family relationships, with a special focus on parent-child relationships. The goal is for participants to become aware and respectful of the different roles, identities and realities of each family member. Modules also emphasise positive discipline and healthy stress/anger management.

Indicators, Celebrating Family

Goal: Families create a safe and nurturing environment for children's spiritual nurture

Outcome 1: Increased support of parents and caregivers to their children's spiritual development

Outcome 2: Increase in church leaders', faith leaders', local family focused organizations' and community leaders' capacity to support families

The two projects implemented at similar times in similar locations, as local church partners agreed and became confident to take on the challenge of family spiritual nurture. Both were considered pilots. Youth Empowerment themes had been used in similar contexts before, but not necessarily operating through church structures, while Celebrating Families had not before been used by WV in camp settings. A focus on learning from these two projects has been intended to inform not only the future direction of both initiatives, but also the overall Faith and Development Strategy.

Figure 1 below shows how the projects fit together and generate learning for the long-term program. Table 1, underneath, shows beneficiary engagement results for the 2016-17 financial year.

Figure 1: Map of dual projects for children and youth, July 2016 – September 2017, leading to an evidence-based Faith and Development Strategy

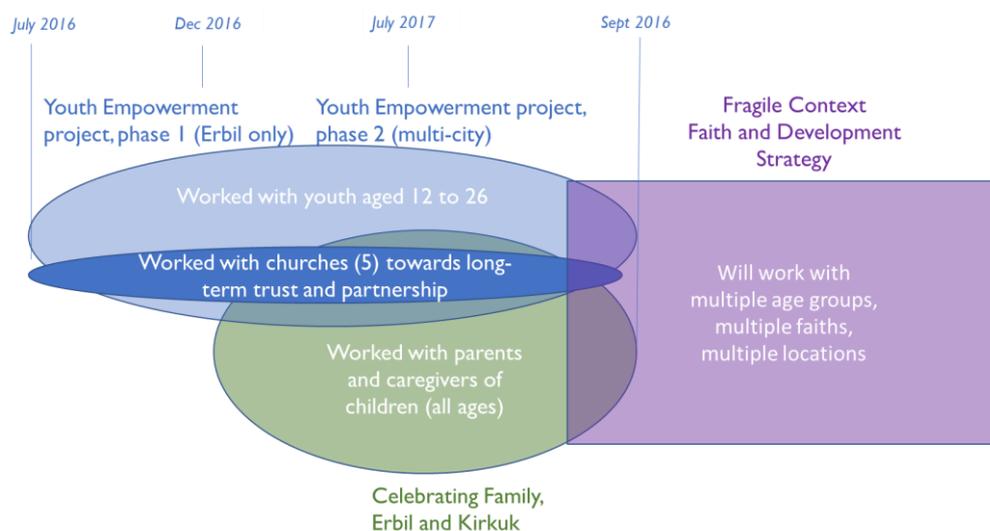


Table 1: Beneficiary engagement, Faith and Development, 2016-17

Timeframe	Children and youth beneficiaries (sex disaggregated)	Church leaders (pastors, lay leaders, etc.) trained or implementing projects for refugees/IDPs (sex disaggregated)	Churches implementing projects for refugees/IDPs	Direct beneficiaries	Indirect beneficiaries	Total beneficiaries
Cumulative Life of Project	Boys: 228	Men: 22	5	Men: 250	2540	3048
	Girls: 235	Women: 23		Women: 258		
Original targets	Boys: 200 Girls: 200	Men: 40 Women: 40	8	Men: 240 Women: 240		480

3. Staff reflection: challenges and lessons learned

Discussions with the project team members and monitoring, evaluation and learning specialists at WV KRI provides useful background information for interpreting results from the three surveys. As described in the background section of this report, implementation happened at a difficult and volatile time, where populations moved quickly and community cohesion was a constant concern. The team needed to overcome a number of challenges in this context. However, when asked whether the projects were needed and should be repeated, there was strong unison from the team that working to restore spiritual nurture and balance was an appropriate and effective strategy in the setting.

Specific challenges raised by the team were:

- Some uncertainty around what it meant to provide spiritual guidance, whose responsibility it was to do so, and how these types of activities intersected with the more familiar and practical activities of Youth Empowerment; young people did not find traditional scripture and preaching relevant, and needed a more integrated mentorship and counselling approach to restoring faith.
- More time needed than expected to gain trust and mutual planning process from faith leaders; again, some confusion over roles and responsibilities which affected the intended faith-led elements of the project (and therefore its sustainability).
- Limited initial consultation with youth as project participants, which led to difficulties in registering young people or in keeping their attention once registered. Some reported that it was boring. Planning and recruitment of young people also did not consider sufficiently different motivators for girls and boys, with girls usually more interested than boys in church-founded youth activities.
- Challenges of communication and planning with volunteers as scope changed to meet the feedback from participants; volunteers needed to have similar ways to give feedback and input into decisions, and were not well informed of changes that had been made.
- A need for greater levels of joint planning with churches, who have their own set of activities and would benefit from integration and curriculum support rather than a full new program to run.
- Poor motivation and dropouts from participants, particularly when activities stopped at exam time for students; after a two-week break, the participation rate fell from around 400 to around 200.

Team discussions also highlighted good practice which should continue, such as:

- Using volunteers with previous experience in working with and motivating youth and building their capacity to train and facilitate in different activities offered by the project.
- Resilience and life skills components of the curriculum, which resonated with and supported confidence of young people to find their way.
- Connecting youth with parents and sharing the same messages, with strong potential for the Faith and Development program if Youth Empowerment and Celebrating Family could run concurrently.

4. Methodology

The research on change in young people's attitudes and wellbeing centred on quasi-experimental sampling of young people living in areas where Youth Empowerment and Celebrating Families was taking place. It involved a personal survey, conducted in one of three ways:

- Through focus group discussion, exploring specific attitudes and themes of importance to young people regarding the projects;
- As a survey interview, face to face with a World Vision enumerator
- As a written survey, filled out and returned without an enumerator present

Data for Youth Empowerment was collected over three timepoints: July 2016, February 2017, September 2017. Data for Celebrating Families was collected over two timepoints: February 2017 and September 2017.

A representative sample size of 225 households in the first time point, 181 households in the second time point and 224 households in the third time point in Erbil Governorate included allowance for 10% drop out rate of respondents. It was calculated based on a target survey population of 2078 direct and indirect beneficiaries, using the RaoSoft⁵ sample size calculator with 95% confidence level and 5% margin of error, and a design effect of 1. Random systematic sampling method was used to select youths for the age category of 12 – 30 years old for participation in the survey in each location. They included both participants and non-participants, allowing comparison of results:

- Over time (15 months)
- By participation (participants, non-participants, discontinued participants)

Survey questions for Youth Empowerment sought to understand young people's understanding of their strengths and assets within the social setting they faced. They asked questions linked to personal and external 'assets' and the resilience of these assets in the context of crisis and change that young people lived with each day⁶. Figure 2 shows the set of eight assets tested in the survey.

Figure 2: External and internal assets tested in the Youth Empowerment Survey, modelled on DAP methodology



Survey questions for Celebrating Family used the preferred measures from the international Celebrating Family module, which longer-term allows aggregation of data with global monitoring of this important child protection tool.

⁵ <http://www.raosoft.com/samplesize.html>

⁶ Note, though the Development Asset Profile (DAP) methodology was drawn on to design the survey, limited resources and time meant that a full DAP process could not be followed. Collection and analysis of data was done in-house.

Data for overall spiritual and family values was collected as a separate initiative, intended as a baseline study and using World Vision International's measures for global child wellbeing outcomes, as follow:

- Children report an increased awareness of God's love⁷
- Children report an improvement in trust and communication with their parent(s)/Caregiver(s)
- Children report an improvement in trust and communication with their peers
- Children report an improvement in trust and communication with their faith leaders

These measures are intended to be applied to children aged 12 to 18.

The survey used suggested questions under these measures as supplied by World Vision International, again allowing longer-term aggregation with global data.

Ethical considerations, privacy and consent

The purpose of the baseline study was shared with the respondents and agreement to participate was sought prior to the interview using oral 'informed consent' as outlined on the smart phone questionnaire. Confidentiality was also discussed and confirmed with respondents prior to the interview.

Limitations

- With two pilot projects operating concurrently in a volatile context, it was appropriate, yet unusual, to conduct baseline/endline data collection without a direct connection to project outcomes and outputs. Focus group data gives insight into activities of particular relevance to participants, but quantitative data looks more broadly at attitudes, confidence and support of young people. A clear project attribution is not possible under this methodology (and was never the intention).
- Changes to participants midway, as families returned to Ninewah or moved into community housing, meant that the same beneficiaries could not be measured at three time points. While survey respondents are similar in their backgrounds and experiences, they are not the same people.
- The volatility of context within the timeframe can be seen in results, and should be considered as part of analysis and further thinking. Where relevant, notes on context have been included for deeper understanding of trends.

⁷ Note, this indicator is not faith-specific and applies to all religions and denominations with them.

5. Results

4.1 Demographics

Surveys took place only in Erbil, including five camp locations and other areas where Christian families had settled. Many of the camps were operated by Iraqi church bodies. In mid-2017, the restoration of relative security to the governorate of Ninewah, from where many of the displaced families had come, along with limited resources to continue camps, saw families preparing to move home or into host community housing. Two of the camps sampled in August 2016 had closed by September 2017.

The demographic of surveyed households remained fairly constant over the three surveys, with over 90% of households headed by men. Average household income had increased by around one third between the first and final measures, from US\$382 to US\$575; however, neither the source of income nor the proportion of employment (male adults comprised 80% of all) changed significantly, and expenses had also doubled over that time. The average household was falling around \$200 short on what was needed for basic needs each month. Families were facing high rates of illness, with over 50% of households containing someone with chronic illness at all three timepoints.

The demographic of Youth Empowerment survey responses is contained to young people from Christian families, aged between 11 and 30 and still living with their parents. For the baseline survey and analysis, no differentiation was necessary between participants and non-participants, as the project had not begun. In February 2017 when the same measures were applied to a different sample, only 38 of 181 surveys (21%) had taken part in the WV project. By September 2017, a more significant proportion of respondents had taken part over the last six months, 134 of 224, or 60%; however, 70 out of the 134 had discontinued their association with the project. Figure 2 shows the breakdown by the three time points.

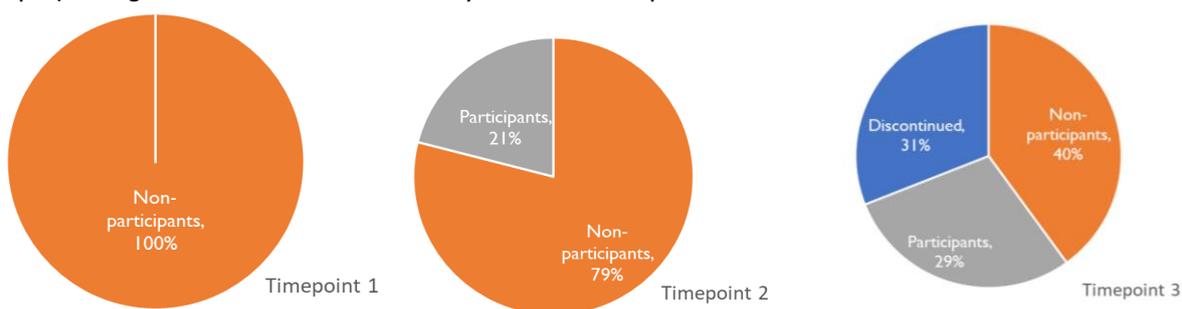


Figure 2: Proportion of respondents who were participants in projects, three timepoints

4.2 Youth Empowerment baseline analysis

The rating scale used for baseline surveys was 1 (not at all (happy/comfortable/agree)) to 4 (almost always (happy comfortable/agree)). The survey contained around 70 questions in total, and participants rated each one: so, 70 ratings were assigned per respondent. Comparing the usage of ratings selected between the three timepoints shows a higher proportion of young people using the rating of 4 than other ratings, and that this also improves over time. This is a positive first observation because it indicates that the respondents are able to identify many areas of their lives that bring happiness and comfort.

Figure 3 compares the individual use of scores between Timepoints 1, 2 and 3.

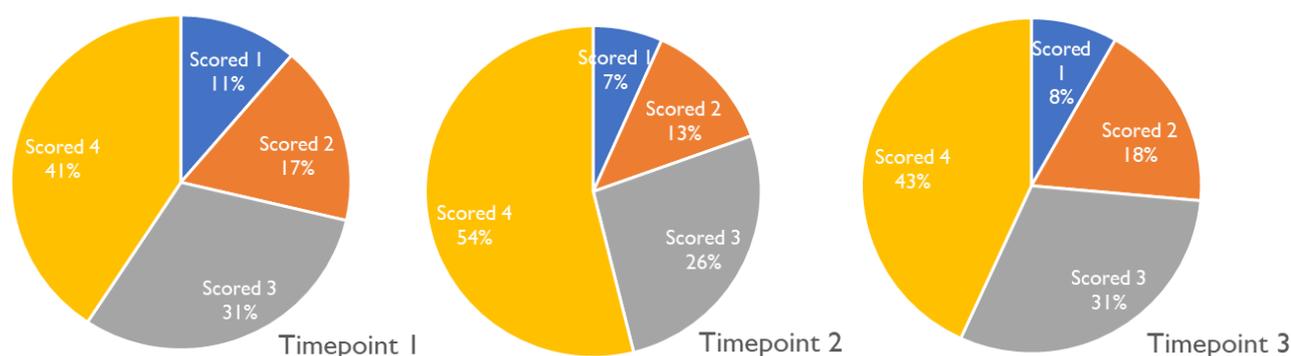


Figure 3: Proportion of respondents using ratings 1,2,3,4 (1 is lowest) in survey, three timepoints

The table below shows average scores for each of the eight assets under review.

Table 2: Baseline overall scores, eight assets							
External assets: young people scored these at 3.1 overall				Internal assets: young people scored these at 3.0 overall			
Support	Empowerment	Boundaries and expectations	Constructive use of time	Commitment to learning	Positive values	Social competencies	Positive identity
3.2	3.1	3.2	2.8	2.9	3.2	3.0	2.9

Overall, considering the challenges faced by young people living in camps and communities in Erbil, baseline scores in internal and external assets as they viewed them were higher than might be expected.

For internal assets, young people were strongest in their 'Positive Values', though with concern on two points within this: standing up for themselves, and developing respect for others. However, they reported strong results for respecting the people they knew, the importance of helping others and trying to help solve social problems. 'Commitment to learning' and 'positive identity' both fell under an average score of 3, with specific areas of concern in reading, enjoying school, feeling good about themselves and feeling in control of their lives. While 'Social Competencies' scored 3 overall, young people scored lower than this on expressing their feelings, planning ahead, resolving conflicts and resisting bad influences.

External assets associated with family and parents were strong in the baseline data, while those associated with neighbours and other adults scored lowest of any category. Young people also reported lower scores in their 'Constructive Use of Time' than other assets, backed up by a low rating in 'Inclusion in family tasks and decisions.'

Bearing in mind that each of these scores is made up of responses to several asset statements from hundreds of respondents, it is not surprising that fluctuations between scores are marginal. Examining the responses to individual questions gives a more nuanced polarity, with some statements scoring as low as 2.4 and others up to 3.8. Figure 4 below shows the individual asset statements at either end of the scale, and a full graph of the internal and external asset statement scores is included as Annex 1.

Figure 4: Lowest and highest individual asset statement scores

Lowest scoring individual asset statements (October 2016)	Score	Internal/external?
Support from adults other than parents	2.4	External
Involved in creative things such as music, theatre or art	2.4	External
Involved in sport, club or other group	2.5	External
Included in family tasks and decisions	2.6	External
Enjoy reading or being read to	2.7	Internal
Care about school	2.7	Internal
Express my feelings in proper ways	2.7	Internal

Feel in control of my life and my future	2.7	Internal
Feel good about my future	2.7	Internal
Lowest scoring individual asset statements (October 2016)	Score	Internal/external?
Try to help social problems	3.5	Internal
Respect others	3.5	Internal
A family that provides me with clear rules	3.6	External
Think it is important to help other people	3.6	Internal
Parents who try to help me succeed	3.7	External
Stay away from tobacco, alcohol and other drugs	3.7	Internal
A family that gives me love and support	3.8	External
A family that knows where I am and what I am doing	3.8	External

4.3 Satisfaction measures

Youth respondents who had taken part in an activity were asked which one, and to rate their satisfaction levels with that activity, as shown in Figure 5. Overall satisfaction was very high. Of the two activities that had a connection to employment opportunities later in life, handicraft/sewing and salon, only one respondent had taken part in each, which explains the perfect score given; both were extremely satisfied with their participation.

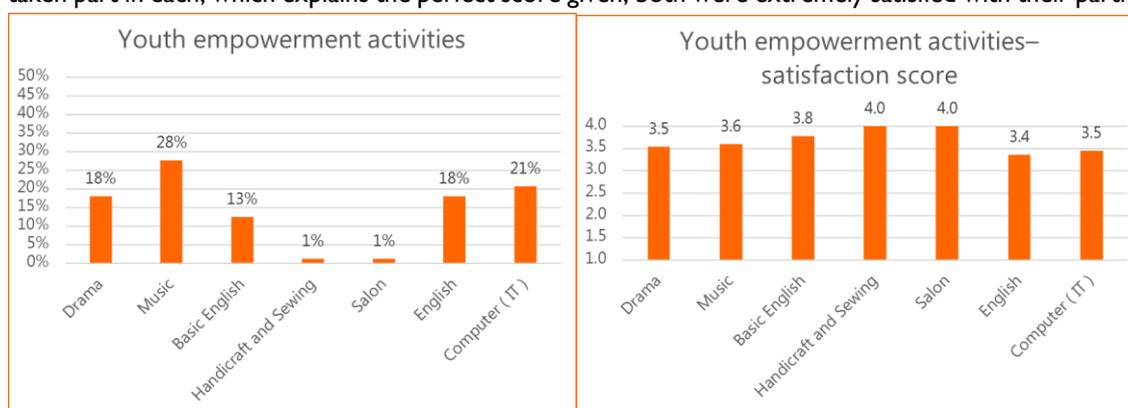


Figure 5: Activities and satisfaction with activities, as rated by respondents

4.4 Timepoint comparison: participants only

Measurement of young people’s assets over a 14-month period revealed an initial spike in advantage for participants, but this was not fully sustained to the end of the project. This may be as a result of initial enthusiasm for the opportunity to participate. It should also be noted that of the three timeframes, the midway measure had fewest participant respondents, and so participants who were particularly happy at that time had potential to skew data.

	External assets overall av.: Baseline 3.1; midway 3.4; endline 3.0				Internal assets overall av.: Baseline 3.0; midway 3.4; endline 3.1			
	Support	Empowerment	Boundaries and expectations	Constructive use of time	Commitment to learning	Positive values	Social competencies	Positive identity
Aug 2016	3.2	3.1	3.2	2.8	2.9	3.2	3.0	2.9
Feb 2017	3.2	3.4	3.5	3.3	3.3	3.5	3.4	3.3
Sep 2017	3.1	3.	3.1	2.9	3.1	3.2	3.0	3.1

While the tool used to measure does not suggest a specific ‘statistical significance’ in volume of change up or down over time, all change between baseline and endline appears slight. It is a good result that the areas originally scoring below three have all lifted a little; however, the results indicate that not enough has changed for young people who took part in the project.

Examining shifts in individual asset statement scores gives more detailed insight into what has been happening for young people over the time that the project has offered its activities and support. Endline results in internal assets are much more consistent and stable than those in external. There have been good outcomes for young

people’s interest in learning, building friendships and taking control of the future. Statements that received a less positive response were often associated with social tensions, such as developing respect, serving and helping others. External assets demonstrate slightly more negative shifts and very few positive shifts. Though family values and support remain at the top end of the scale, being valued, appreciated, given things to do and trusting neighbours have slipped. The most significant upward shift between baseline and endline has been young people’s participation in creative activities, but it still remains under a score of three. Figure 6 itemises individual asset scores that have shifted upwards or downwards by three points or more. Of these, three asset statements among the bottom ranked at baseline have moved upwards significantly; in general, the positive shifts are associated with the enjoyment of learning, and the negative shifts in how to relate with people outside the home.

Figure 6: Individual asset statement scores that demonstrate significant shift over time

Downward shifts, individual asset statement scores August 2016 – September 2017 comparison	Score shift	Internal/external?
Developing respect for other people	2.8 to 2.3	Internal
Serving others	3.2 to 2.9	Internal
Accept people who are different from me	3.2 to 3	Internal
Avoid things that are dangerous or unhealthy	3.4 to 3	Internal
Neighbours who watch out for me	2.8 to 2.4	External
Given useful roles and responsibilities	2.9 to 2.6	External
Good neighbours who care about me	3 to 2.5	External
A school that enforces rules	3.1 to 2.6	External
Parents who are good at talking with me about things	3.4 to 3.1	External
A family that provides me with clear rules	3.6 to 3.3	External
Upward shifts, individual asset statement scores August 2016 – September 2017 comparison		
Care about school	2.7 to 3.1	Internal
Feel good about my future	2.7 to 3.1	Internal
Stand up for what I believe in	2.8 to 3.2	Internal
Do my homework	2.9 to 3.2	Internal
Enjoy learning	3.0 to 3.4	Internal
Actively engaged in learning new things	3.0 to 3.3	Internal
Involved in creative things such as music theatre or art	2.4 to 2.9	External

4.5 Timepoint comparison: Participants versus non-participants

Further splitting of data into participants and non-participants over time confirms the observation of a spike in internal and external assets for participants by February 2017. Sadly, these gains are lost by the final measure and many areas note a reduced score from both participants and non-participants.

It is crucial here to consider the context of movement, camp closure and young people’s struggle to fit into new, more diverse communities, often facing discrimination and reduced personal security as a result. Focus groups confirmed that project activities remained important to participants, but the increase of external pressures over that time countered young people’s ability to remain confident and hopeful.

While it was not measured in survey questions or specifically asked in focus groups, it could reasonably be argued that continuation in the project stopped young people from slipping further in their assessment of the world around them. However, there are too many similarities in responses from non-participants to support this theory; at times their responses are more positive.

Figure 7, next page, shows the eight assets, comparing at the two relevant timepoints⁸ the scores of participants, non-participants and discontinued participants.

⁸ Timepoint 1 does not offer comparative data as the project had not yet started.

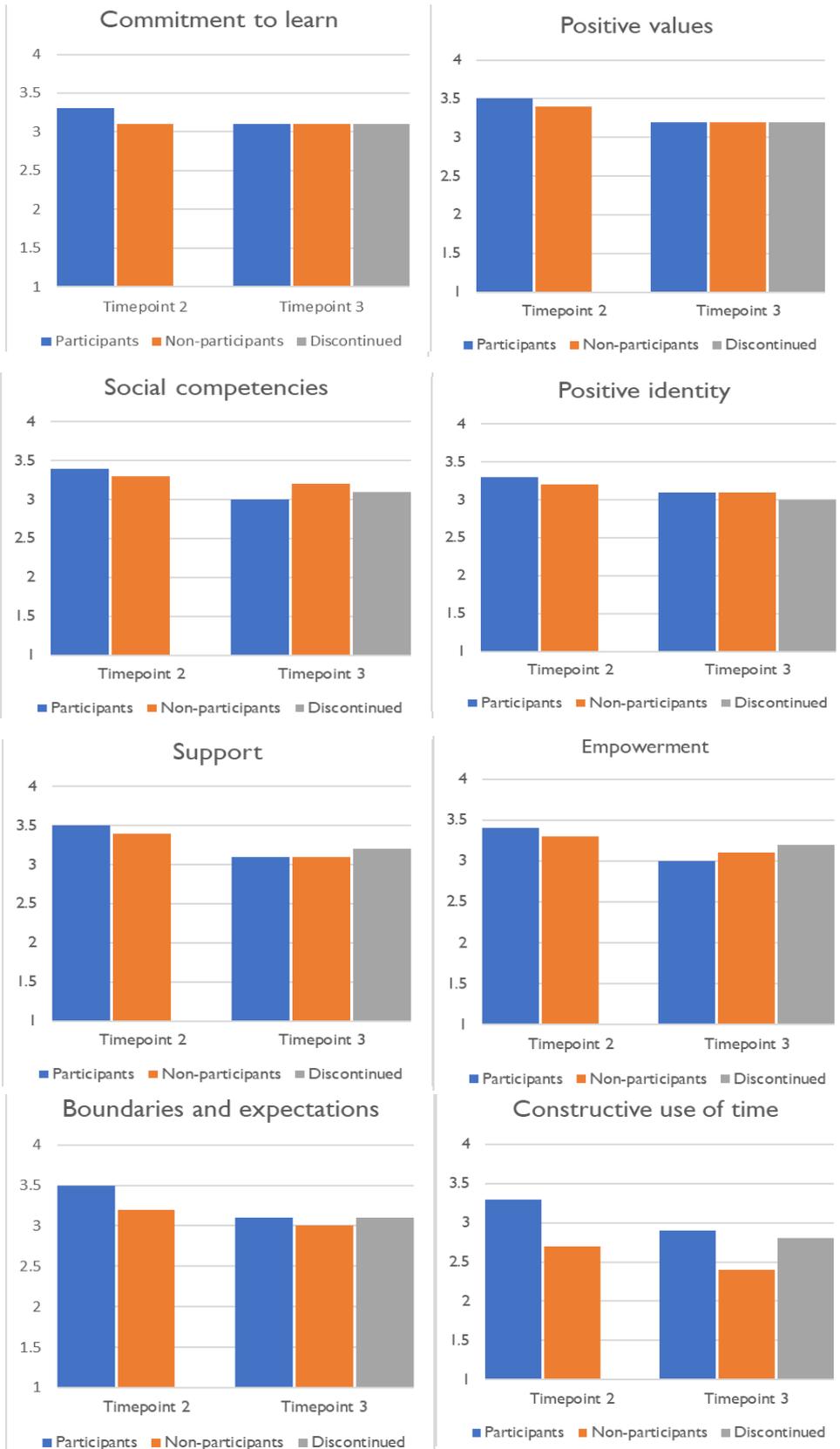


Figure 7: Comparison of internal/external asset scores, participants to non-participants over time

Against the specific asset statements, participants gave higher scores in a few areas, for instance:

- Actively engaged and learning new things
- A school that cares about kids and encourages me
- Staying away from alcohol and tobacco
- Building friendships with other people

But non-participants came out above participants as well, for instance in:

- Good neighbours who care about me
- Stand up for what I believe in (though all respondent types had strong positive shifts in this asset)
- Developing respect for others (where all respondent types had strong negative shifts)
- Express my feelings in proper ways

The implication of this is that important life skills assets that young people need as they transition into adulthood in an uncertain and fragile setting are not being sufficiently addressed in the current Youth Empowerment project. Non-participants gave themselves greater scores than participants in vital areas of social cohesion such as:

- Accepting people who are different from me
- Resolving conflict without anyone getting hurt
- Resisting bad influences
- Avoiding things that are dangerous

The third category, of discontinued participants, occasionally shows the strongest results, particularly in their external assets around safety and support from friends and family. These young people have drawn value from the project even though they did not complete it. With many now living in altered circumstances within new communities, their ability to apply what they have learned about their internal assets and resilience is being tested in different ways from participants who have not moved from the camps. It is actually a promising sign of sustainability, therefore, that discontinued participants are scoring themselves on a par or greater than current participants.

4.6 Focus group analysis, internal/external assets

The focus group discussions centred on validation and giving meaning to the data analysis from the surveys. In total, 57 children took part, with two groups of boys and two of girls, divided by age as follows:

- Boys 10 – 12: 12
- Boys over 13: 16
- Girls 10 – 12: 17
- Girls over 13: 12

Focus groups gave insight on the four internal assets as follows:

- **Commitment to learning:**

Participants confirmed that taking part in the Youth Empowerment project has helped them to develop both academically and creatively. While enthusiasm for reading had increased slightly, it was tempered by unavailability of books or a suitable environment to read in, and some participants mentioned that teachers at their schools are not encouraging them to learn. Girls were more likely to read than boys. Among non-participants, there was keenness to get involved in activities or classes that might help to develop their skills, but no opportunity for them to do so.

“I love acting, but my father encouraged me to join the English class because it’s more helpful for me to develop my language skills. However, the project offered me a role in a play for the festival, which gave me the opportunity to show my talent.”

Maryam, aged 14

- **Positive values**

Participants and non-participants did not differ widely in their belief in helping and respecting people in need, but talked about how difficult it was becoming given patterns of migration and the uncertain future, which cause frustrations and tensions in families. Respect for older people was evident, for instance in helping them to the market or home with heavy bags. However, in one discussion among male participants, the boys admitted that they sometimes hit and scolded other children younger than them.

“It’s important to respect everyone to please God.”

Non-participant in focus group discussion (name and age not provided)

- **Social competencies:**

Young people in focus groups said that social cohesion was a need that would bring great benefits to their wellbeing and confidence. They felt it would help them to express their feelings and participate more in community life. Some of the boys, including participants and non-participants, are smoking hookahs and cigarettes and drinking alcohol, including in the 11 to 13 age group and often with the consent of their parents. However, most respondents were doing their best to stay away from dangerous or unhealthy practices.

- **Positive identity:**

Project participants reported strongly that the project had positively impacted their feelings about themselves. They mentioned the importance of their relationships with the volunteer facilitators, who encouraged them to take up the right activities for their interests and needs. Among non-participants, there was less satisfaction about opportunities and choices. Young people regretted being lazy, careless about school and spending too much time on social media, but did not have immediate solutions for these (universal) youth challenges. Despite this, positive attitudes were still evident, helping children to get through challenges in their lives.

“I failed in my midterms when I was 1st grade. I was disappointed at first but that motivated me to study harder and try my best so I can rise my grades and pass at the end of the semester.”

Yousif, aged 12, non-participant

In terms of the four external assets, summary insights are:

- **Support**

Parental support is an existing and valued asset for young Christians in Erbil. Participants and non-participants alike shared stories of how their parents encouraged them through financial support and frank discussions, school attendance and homework to become successful in the future. They receive their parents’ love, respect and care in different ways. However, they were not interacting or making friends with other adults outside their family, and their trust of other adults apart from close neighbours remained low.

“My parents show me their love and respect in many ways. For example, by getting gifts and providing what I need without me asking... I love my family even if they can’t sometimes give me what I want.”

Rawaa, 13 years old

- **Empowerment:**

Most young people in focus groups reported that they feel safe at home because they are with parents and other family members. They also feel protected at home because they have someone – often many people - to defend them if something happens. However, children also reported violence against them in the home. Very few were involved in family responsibilities or decisions, as their opinions were not considered important compared to adults or older siblings.

“If my family catches me mocking or making fun of someone, they’ll use physical punishment against me.”

Yaqqub, 11 years old, participant

- **Boundaries and expectation:**

Focus group discussions confirmed that family supervision is culturally strong, with families knowing where their children are and what they are doing. Young people adhere to these rules too, telling their parents before they leave and calling them to let them know if they’re going to be late for home. They reported they would ask for permission, and if parents didn’t allow them to go they would not.

- **Constructive use of time:**

Young people were spending their time differently from each other, with non-participants more likely to stay at home with their parents and participants, particularly boys, more likely to spend spare time at school and seeing their friends. Girls will spend more time at home but go with friends to social clubs and project activities at weekends. There is a gap in sporting activity for youth due to lack of availability. Soccer has been the main focus of sport, but the soccer field previously used has become expensive and many children have moved too far away to get there safely. Non-participants have no facilities at all in their camp for sports.

4.7 Assets by context view, over time

The measurement tool allows assets to be sorted into an additional view which provides insight into the quality and gaps of support and services available to young people: personal, social, school, family and community (shown with average scores for each at Table 3. Sorted in this way, the data set shows a slide over time for young people’s scores of community assets.

Table 3: Scores over time, sorted by support and service criteria

	Personal			Social			Family			School			Community		
	Partic- ipants	Non- partic- ipants	Dis- continu- ed	Partic- ipants	Non- partic- ipants	Dis- continu- ed	Partic- ipants	Non- partic- ipants	Dis- continued	Partic- ipants	Non- partic- ipants	Dis- continu- ed	Partic- ipants	Non- partic- ipants	Dis- continu- ed
Aug 2016		3.1			3.1			3.4			3			3	
Sep 2017	3.1	3.1	3.1	3.1	3.1	3.2	3.4	3.4	3.5	3	2.9	3	2.8	2.8	2.9

Focus group insights were also analysed using the filter of context assets, and found the following:

- **Personal**

There was no strong difference in attitudes and personal values between participants and non-participants, with personality, values and opportunity all playing a role in how young people made decisions. Asked for examples of when they felt good about themselves, participants said it was because they didn’t lie; non-participants felt good about doing well at school and listening to their parents. There is a clear problem with boys and young men’s usage of cigarettes and alcohol, associated with local culture and tolerance; girls reported they stayed away from anything of that nature.

- **Social**

There was a greater likelihood of non-beneficiaries than beneficiaries feeling valued by the people in the neighborhood. This had to do with the area or camp where young people were living, which was more likely to impact their impressions of safety outside the home than any project activity. For instance, non-participants living in Ashti camp said their neighbours were nice people who offered help when it was needed, while participants said neighbours in Ankawa had not been nice and had made them feel they didn't belong. Since moving to Qaraqosh, these respondents thought the neighbours were much better.

“Once I was riding my bicycle and I was going very fast, a guy in my neighborhood stopped me and said, ‘Son, don’t go this fast you might hit someone or get into a car accident.’ I felt valued.”

Yousif, aged 12, non-participant

- **Family**

All focus group discussions confirmed that there were clear rules in place and that they were understood by family members and friends: for example, a specific time for lunch or dinner, and the need for children to let their parents know if they were likely to be late. Permission to go out was also consistent among households. Participants had become more vocal in their families and some were being consulted on opinions and ideas; however, some male participants said that this advice was rarely taken.

- **School**

The quality of schooling varies across locations, with some providing clear rules and others where teachers were not very interested in their students or their needs. The project did not engage schools as partners in the pilot phase. Enhancing consistency of education is an ongoing challenge for displaced communities and their structures.

- **Community**

Developing respect received a low score at baseline and again at endline survey. Hierarchy of age, and unwillingness to respect and help children young than them, was more of a challenge for male participants than non-participants. Participants were more active in community including in sports, music and art. In addition to opportunities for these activities, the project had given some solidarity between participants to help them continue. In contrast, non-participants said they would likely be teased if they took part in creative classes.

4.8 Celebrating Families baseline analysis

Questions in the baseline survey aimed to understand the levels of spiritual nurture available to children in their homes through the love and good care of parents. Parents and their children were asked the same question so that different perspectives could be compared. The baseline found discrepancy between parents' attitudes and those of their children on most questions, though agreement on the regularity of scripture and prayers in the home. Overall, family relationships appeared strong, with most scores in the mid 3s (out of a possible 4). It is particularly revealing that children scored questions about their parents' support at 3.6, higher than their parents did, and approaching maximum possible scores⁹⁹. Table 4, next page, shows these scores.

4.9 Celebrating Families timepoint comparison: context and justification

Over the time that Celebrating Families has operated, parents and children have reduced scores initially given in most categories. The data in Table 4 suggests there has been significant slippage in children discussing hopes and dreams with their parents, and parents also see that their children are seeking spiritual counsel less (though children rate this at a similar level to the original score). The regularity of scripture and prayer has decreased. Family interaction appears more difficult than previously.

⁹⁹ It is not realistic in any poll that all respondents would use the highest possible '4' rating.

However, the two surveys are not strictly comparable. Initial Celebrating Families workshops had been held before the baseline survey, in relatively cohesive and secure church communities outside camps. The baseline survey did not ask whether families had taken part in these workshops, so participant and non-participant data is merged. After this time, the project expanded to camp residents who did not have the same relationships with their church and were often more marginalised. Focus group validation found that many parents referred to worsened situations for their family over the timespan of the Celebrating Families project. It is important to recognise the context of anxiety and uncertainty that many of these families are facing, which can affect faith and its family rituals.

Table 4: Baseline and followup survey, spiritual nurture (Celebrating Family project), participants only					
NB: Some wording of questions has been changed to simplify data for end use.					
Parents	Timepoint 2 (baseline)	Timepoint 3	Children	Timepoint 2 (baseline)	Timepoint 3
My children have shared their hopes and dreams about their life in the past 30 days.	3.6	2.6	I shared my hopes and dreams about my life and family with my parents in the past 30 days.	2.9	2.6
My children are supported by us through their life journey and experiences.	2.9	3.2	My parents support me through my life journey and experiences.	3.5	3.6
My children seek spiritual counsel by us (parents) when they experience brokenness in life.	3.5	2.8	My parents provide spiritual counsel when I experience brokenness in life.	3.1	3.2
We have spiritual activities (prayers, reading of scripture) in our house.	3.0	2.5	We have spiritual activities (prayers, reading of scripture) in our house.	2.9	2.4
Our relationship with our children is a strong bond.	2.8	3.2	My relationship with my parents is a strong bond.	3.6	3.5
We foster positive discipline and rules at home.	3.5	3.4	I experience positive discipline and rules at home.	3.7	3.6
We interact well as a family, with quality time, gifts and kindness.	3.5	2.8	We interact well as a family, with quality time, gifts and kindness.	3.1	3.0
We practice forgiveness and thankfulness in the home.	3.0	3.0	We practice forgiveness and thankfulness in the home.	3.4	2.9
My existing relationship with my children doesn't need to change much.	3.3	3.1	My existing relationship with my parents doesn't need to change much.	3.5	3.2

The project has been in place for less than a year, and much of that time has been spent in engagement and training of church partners before the modules began to reach families with any degree of regularity. Participants in the project reported they were highly satisfied with their experience. The context, and results in terms of participant demand and satisfaction, suggest that this project with some revisions and more realistic timeframes is badly needed in KRI.

Comparison of participant to non-participant families at Timepoint 3 is shown below, and should also be read in context of this information. As well, it should be noted that the different sample sizes (under 40 participant families and over 180 non-participants) reduce confidence intervals when data is disaggregated in this way.

Table 5: Comparison of survey results, participants to non-participants, spiritual nurture (Celebrating Family project)					
Parents	Partici- pants	Non- partici- pants	Children	Partici- pants	Non- partici- pants
My children have shared their hopes and dreams about their life in the past 30 days.	2.6	2.7	I shared my hopes and dreams about my life with my parents in the past 30 days.	2.6	2.7
My children are supported by us through their life journey and experiences.	3.2	3.3	My parents support me through my life journey and experiences.	3.6	3.4
My children seek spiritual counsel by us (parents) when they experience brokenness in life.	2.8	2.9	My parents provide spiritual counsel when I experience brokenness in life.	3.2	3.1
We have spiritual activities (prayers, reading of scripture) in our house.	2.5	2.6	We have spiritual activities (prayers, reading of scripture) in our house.	2.4	2.5
Our relationship with our children is a strong bond.	3.2	3.4	My relationship with my parents is a strong bond.	3.5	3.4
We foster positive discipline and rules at home.	3.4	3.4	I experience positive discipline and rules at home.	3.6	3.5
We interact well as a family, with quality time, gifts and kindness.	2.8	2.8	We interact well as a family, with quality time, gifts and kindness.	3.0	2.8
We practice forgiveness and thankfulness in the home.	3.0	3.1	We practice forgiveness and thankfulness in the home.	2.9	3.2
My existing relationship with my children doesn't need to change much.	3.1	3.3	My existing relationship with my parents doesn't need to change much.	3.2	3.2

A final set of questions asked children and their parents to define 'fullness of life', a Biblical concept based on the words of Jesus, and the core of World Vision's aspiration for children. To assist with this, six options were provided, and respondents could choose up to three. Figure 8 below maps the percentage of participants choosing each option. Again, it shows discrepancy between children's and parents' perspectives, the most notable examples being:

- **Relationship with God:** children at both timepoints were significantly more likely to select this definition than their parents.
- **Provision of needs:** the least selected definition overall, but parents were twice as likely as children to use it.

The project framework does not clarify how this information is to be used or whether there is a set of answers supported by particular aspects of the curriculum. At this stage, then, the best use of this data remains in comparing what children and parents think, as a tool for improved understanding of one another.

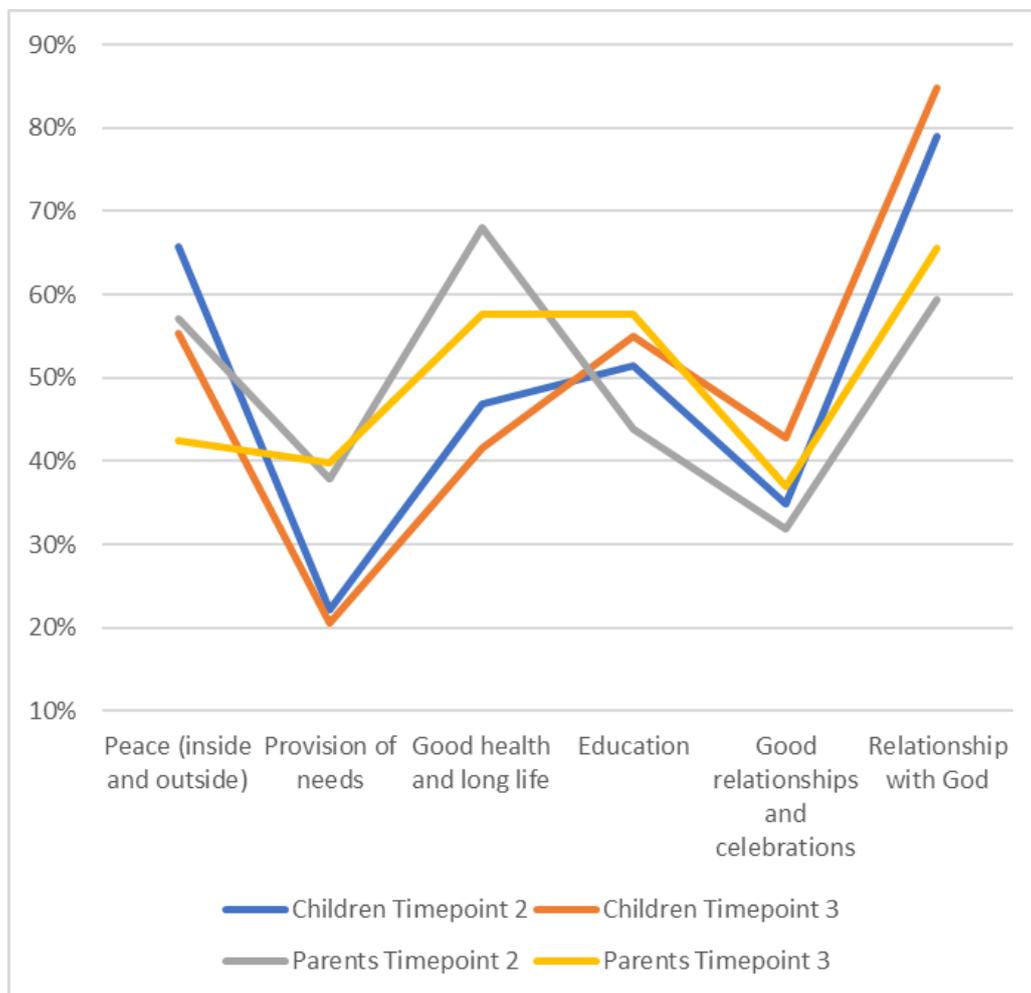


Figure 8: Respondent definitions of 'fullness of life', comparing parents' and children's responses over two timepoints.

4.10 Youth Empowerment and Celebrating Families together: endline analysis

In the September 2017 survey, 38 families (or 17% of total surveyed) had been part of Celebrating Families project activities. The data for these families was considered against a 'control' group of all other families, including those in Youth Empowerment but not Celebrating Families as well as those who had not taken part in any World Vision project. Comparing scores across the 57 asset statements, there were eight areas where young people from Celebrating Families had scored themselves higher than the control by two or more points, and **none** where they scored themselves lower by more than two points. This is a more positive result for young people's changed assets than was measured in comparison of Youth Empowerment participation/non-participation. The graph below shows which asset statements appear to have been strengthened for young people through Celebrating Families.

This is a small sample. While the limited number in each category suggests caution at this stage on concluding that the two models together multiply results, it certainly raises interesting and positive ideas for further phases of monitoring youth empowerment effectiveness.

Figure 9: Proportion of respondents who were participants of: Celebrating Family, Youth Empowerment, and both projects

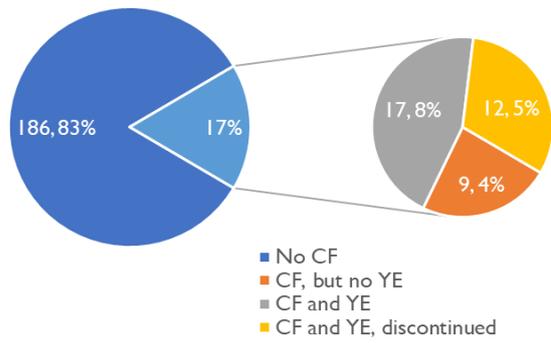
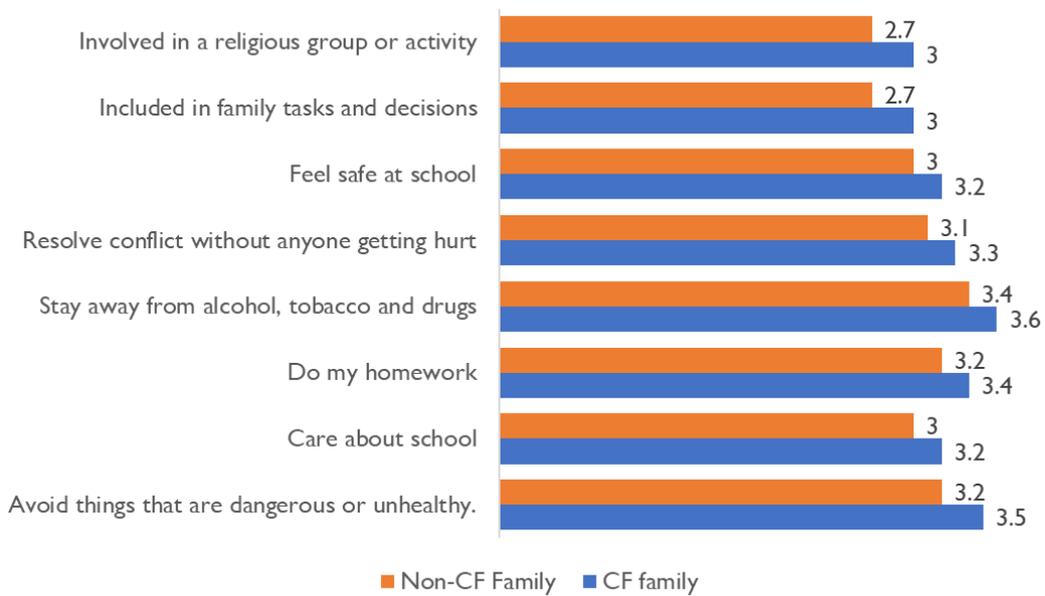


Figure 10: Eight asset statements where youth associated with Celebrating Family scored themselves higher than non-participants

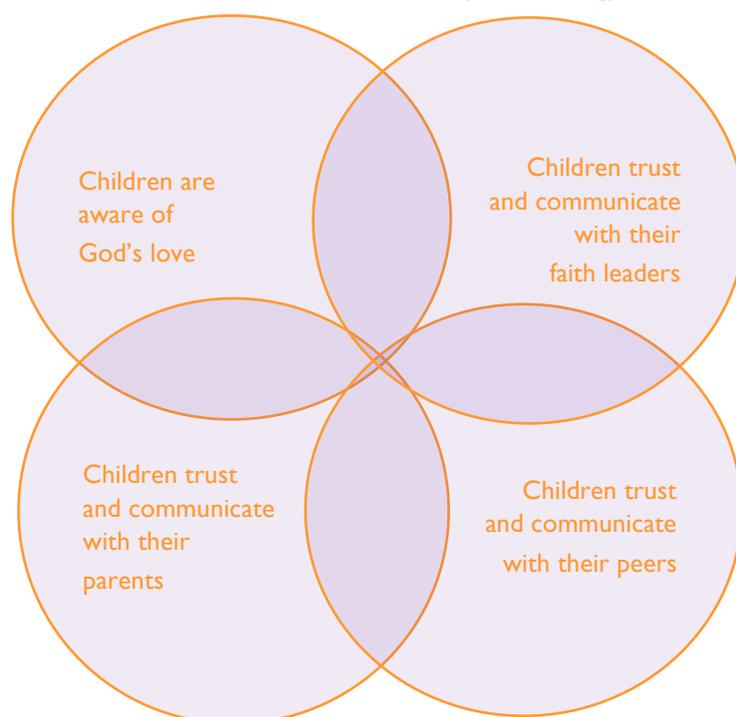


4.11 Faith and Development Assessment Findings

WV KRI's Faith and Development program has its own outcome indicators, not attached to any one project but assuming that all projects which include spiritual nurture will contribute to improved levels against these indicators. When selecting these outcomes, care was taken to align with World Vision International's child wellbeing agenda, so that data could contribute to global results and lessons in helping children know love. The four outcomes together build a foundation of relational care that allows a child to develop in a safe, secure, self-aware environment (Figure 11).

Much of the data presented within the body of this report can support measures and reflections on WV KRI's progress towards the outcome indicators. However, the data was not disaggregated by different faiths, as the participants to date have been Christian. One further baseline study was conducted to draw data on the different perspectives of young people growing up Christian, Muslim and Yazidi. It took place in four urban locations where WV KRI has current children's programmes.

Figure 11: Intersecting outcomes for the WV KRI Faith and Development Strategy



The results, shown in Table 6 on the next page, use the same scoring system as previously, and show:

- Awareness of God's love (religious or existential awareness, spirituality and hope) falls below 3 (out of 4) in most cases, though Christian children have a slightly higher tendency to agree with this indicator.
- Improved trust and communication with parents is scored well above 3, across locations and faiths.
- Improved trust and communication with peers falls well short of 3, suggesting this is an area of concern and focus for child and adolescent life skills.
- Improved trust and communication with faith leaders – a question that has not been asked in previous surveys – scores badly. Christian faith leaders are rated above Yazidi or Muslim in terms of trust and communication with children, but still on average a 2 out of 4. The low baseline on this reiterates the validity of working with faith leaders from all relevant religions to enhance priority on working with vulnerable, unhappy children and youth.

Table 6: Faith in Development Assessment Summary findings								
Label	Duhok		Erbil		Kirkuk		Ninewa	
Religious group	Christian	Yezidi	Christian	Muslim	Christian	Muslim	Christian	Muslim
Overall average by religious affiliation	2.7	2.3	2.9	2.5	2.7	2.5	2.9	2.6
Indicator 1.1: # and % of boys and girls (12-18 years) who report on awareness of God's love (measured by respective index-Experience of God, Spiritual Practices, Religious Well-Being; Existential Wellbeing/hope) in the last 12 months	2.7	2.3	3.1	2.9	3.0	2.7	3.0	2.9
Indicator 2.1: # and % of boys and girls (12-18 years) who report an improvement in trust and communication with their parent(s)/Caregiver(s) in the last 12 months	3.2	3.3	3.4	3.2	3.1	3.1	3.4	3.3

Indicator 2.2: # and % of boys and girls (12-18 years) who report an improvement in trust and communication with their peers in the last 12 months	2.6	2.7	2.9	2.5	2.7	2.6	2.9	2.6
Indicator 2.3: # and % of boys and girls (12-18 years) who report an improvement in trust and communication with their faith leaders in the last 12 months	2.0	1.3	1.9	0.8	1.7	1.0	2.1	1.1

6. Conclusions: Key lessons in context

The baseline and monitoring for the two projects have used over 70 standard questions at three different timepoints, generating a vast amount of data on the relational and spiritual wellbeing of children and their parents in KRI. This report summarises the key points emerging from the survey, with an emphasis on data that links to World Vision's projects and the Faith and Development program. But many more nuanced results can be found in specific questions or groups of questions, including information about school, home, community and peer interactions, beyond what has been included here.

To add context to the results, staff conducted satisfaction surveys, led focus groups with participants and non-participants, and added their own insights through discussions with the author of this report. This combination of data and perspective has drawn lessons from the first 18 months of the Faith and Development program which may help to refine efforts in KRI as well as in other programs. For instance, Celebrating Families is now being introduced in several other countries affected by the Syria crisis, and the experiences of WV KRI in trialling CF in a fragile context will be invaluable knowledge for other World Vision offices.

The following lessons are offered:

- **The Faith and Development program is supporting the transition to community development.** These projects are part of a broader KRI strategy bridging the divide between emergency response, with its emphasis on delivery of services, and longer term development with elements of social cohesion and children's protection, stimulation and happiness at all ages. Relationships with institutions, including faith institutions, are vital for effective community engagement. The time required for this type of work in fragile contexts is longer term than many grants allow, and it is important that the projects in this report are seen as phases in something more constant, rather than standalone initiatives.
- **It takes time to engage churches in a fragile or post-war context.** Christianity is not homogenous across geographies and cultures, even within a country's borders, and churches in KRI are facing the same challenges as society more broadly: reduced community trust, limited resources, mobile populations and overwhelming need. The models used in the Faith and Development program so far are heavily dependent on the will and capacity of local religious leaders to run them. Getting to this point has taken longer than anticipated and affected interim results. However, it is likely that investing the time needed in building relationships will be worthwhile in the long term for the sustainability of faith-centred youth curriculum.
- **Peacebuilding and life skills are strategies not only for youth empowerment but also for social cohesion.** The slippage of children's self-reported security and trust over the 18 months of monitoring shows the vulnerability of personal empowerment in the face of negative external changes. Internally displaced people and their host communities remain in a state of flux in KRI, with the expectation that they can continue to absorb changes to circumstance and social structure. Regardless of the causes of negative shifts to security and trust, the survey results reflect reduced resilience to further change. A conclusion from this is that the current Youth Empowerment project is not as effective as it might be in promoting resilience and acceptance among young people. As it expands to include children of all faiths, opportunities for young people to drive positive change in social inclusion and cooperation should be explored.
- **The geographical location of activities was key to their success or failure.** Proximity to young people's homes was vital for security and motivation, and for their parents allowing them to attend. As families moved around or between cities in search of appropriate accommodation, their children often could not continue attending World Vision's program. This lesson indicates the importance of full engagement from church leaders, including with one another, to provide a certain consistency of youth mentorship in different locations and to maintain connections with children who move away. Achieving this level of commitment and collaboration was unrealistic within the timeframe. In the meantime, young people rated their constructive use of time relatively low compared to other assets, and the measure slipped substantially between timepoints 2 and 3.

- **Young people have enjoyed their activities and increased their self-confidence; however, scores still indicate that the need for participation is unmet.** While children appreciated opportunities to learn and create, the relevance of activities to their personal well-being and positive attitudes is unclear. Scoring of internal and external assets were very similar between participants and non-participants of Youth Empowerment activities, suggesting that basic concerns such as an uncertain future or safety and respect in the community remained relevant. Future phases could consider more deliberate linkages with community structures and decisions for more meaningful contributions from young people to society.
- **Monitoring of attitudes and assets over time is providing rich data applicable to a range of programs and initiatives beyond the Faith and Development framework.** The survey results are a step removed from project activities and outcomes and cannot confidently be linked to World Vision’s work without substantial qualitative enquiry. In any case, comparative results between participants and non-participants are too similar to claim project outcomes have occurred at this early stage. The strongest worth of this data currently is as a social survey, providing information on levels and sources of anxiety, fear and insecurity, but also on hopes and values among young people and their parents. It shows areas of concern – for instance, support from adults other than parents, or being included in family decisions – but also areas of high general satisfaction – for instance, parents that know where their children are, give them support and help them to succeed. High scores for positive discipline indicate that violent punishment and anger in homes is not common. Lower scores in questions to do with support and safety in schools suggest that more can be done with teachers and local governments to improve quality of schooling. WV KRI should consider continuation and further themed analysis of this data to support needs assessments and targeted programs across the range of child-focused sectors in KRI.
- **Disaggregation by gender does not show strong differences in results, and other measures are needed to understand the particular needs and experiences of girls and young women.** Questions across the surveys look at self-assessed scores of well-being, satisfaction, contentment and security, but do not ask about what it means within this to be a girl (or a boy). Some of the qualitative information, for instance focus groups or staff reflection, indicates that girls and boys have different motivations for attending and completing Youth Empowerment activities. Though some activities have been designed with girls in mind, for instance salon training, there is a gap in information on what is working best from a gender-sensitive perspective. Gender outcomes in terms of attitudes to girls’ equal rights and capacities are also not being measured currently. The addition of some gender-focused questions to the survey in the future may reveal nuances of participation that can help to understand gender within Faith and Development.
- **The two projects (Youth Empowerment and Celebrating Families) have strong potential to support each other’s outcomes, if implemented concurrently.** The trends shown in Section 4.10 in this report suggest a possibility that together, the projects deliver enhanced results. This makes sense, as similar messages and ideas are being shared with parents and their children through appropriate faith-based channels. While children and their parents do not always agree when answering similar questions, their overall scores on many measures are higher than those for non-participants – a trend that is not occurring at this stage in data considered from the two projects separately¹⁰. It is too early in the project to draw a solid conclusion on this, especially as the projects were not interdependent in their implementation schedule, but given that goals are similar, there is a good business case here for more deliberate merging of the projects.

¹⁰ Note that the sample size becomes very small under this disaggregation. Further enquiry is merited before using this observation as evidence.

7. Recommendations

Based on the above lessons, WV KRI could consider the following recommendations for expanding the Faith and Development program:

1. Continue with phased monitoring using the same survey methodology and questions, in order to create directly comparable data sets spanning several years.
2. Develop communication materials that present this data in a user-friendly way for other sectors and partners to draw upon.
3. Encourage children and young people to be part of project design, particularly in Youth Empowerment, to find ways that activities can link to social inclusion and participation in community development.
4. Use information from the surveys to refine goals and targets for Celebrating Family in the Christian KRI context: for instance, as families appear to have strong bonds, refocus parenting efforts to support their children's peer or school interactions.
5. Based on good results across different denominations in the Youth Empowerment pilot, further develop peacebuilding and social cohesion curriculum within the project.
6. Use phased projects over time to develop the necessary relationships, shared ownership and capacity from religious leaders to engage effectively with youth, including not only stable families but also at-risk or marginalised youth.
7. Apply a stronger gender lens in design and monitoring to ensure project activities meet the needs of girls and young women.
8. Design and implement a different (less quantitative) methodology for measuring how the two projects (Youth Empowerment and Celebrating Families) interact, with the view to further concurrent implementation.

Annex I: Individual Asset Statement scores

Below, the individual asset statement scores have been ordered into two views.

The first view shows only baseline data, ordered from lowest scores to highest scores, with scores under 3 highlighted in red, and scores over 3.5 highlighted in green. This view helps as baseline data to set and measure improvements in the areas that fall into the red zone, many of them to do with control, interactions with adults and the ability to learn.

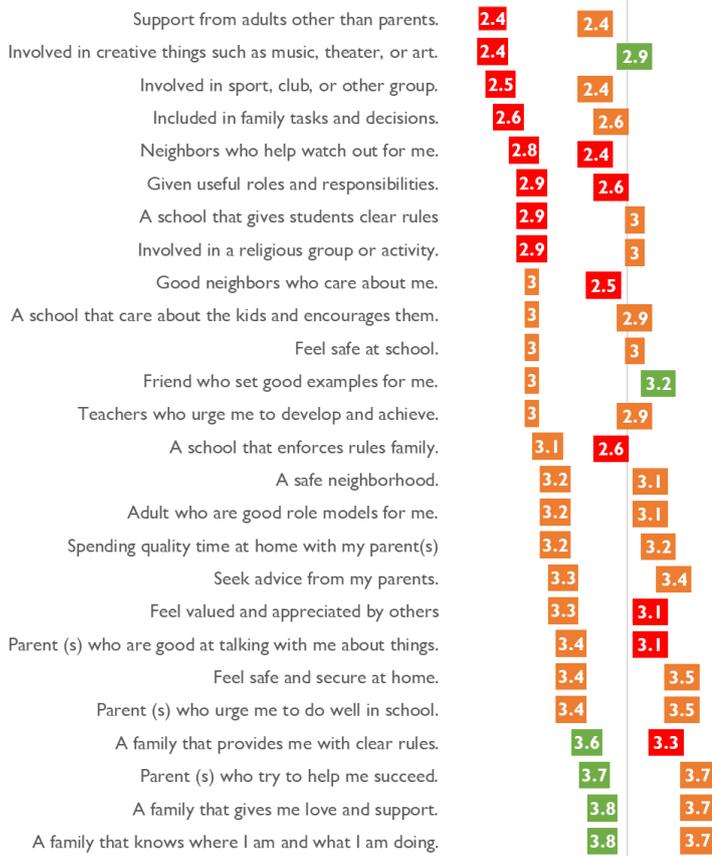
The second view compares baseline data to endline data, using only data from participants in the Youth Empowerment project, to see whether such improvements have been achieved. For the second set of figures, red has been used to show a decrease of two or more points, and green to show an increase of two or more points. This view helps with consideration of project effectiveness, and whether it achieved what it set out to do in terms of improving young people's world outlook.

View 1: Baseline, ordered lowest to highest ranking



View 2: Comparison, baseline (October 2016) to timepoint 3 (September 2017)

External asset statements



Internal asset statements

