

World Weekend of Prayer for Children at Risk

➤ 2020 Report

A total of 23 countries across 4 continents joined together in prayer over one weekend in 2020 for children who are at risk in our world. Our partner networks joined 2,027 churches and organisations together in prayer and connected with a further 5,680 churches through partnering with larger church bodies.



2,027

Partner Churches



204,283

People at Events/Online



772,283

Total people Praying

The theme of this year's World Weekend of Prayer was '**Hands to serve Him**'. We believe that everyone has been created by God with unique characteristics to carry out His work by caring for those around them. This World Weekend of Prayer (WWP) was an opportunity for children to realise the potential they have to influence the world around them through positive actions and prayer.

This year's WWP was impacted by the Covid-19 global Pandemic meaning that many partner networks had to restructure their programmes with lots of events being moved online. Despite this, the World Weekend of Prayer provided a great opportunity to bring encouragement and hope through this time of uncertainty.



El Salvador

Viva Network Reach:

28 initiatives were run by our partner networks -

Engaging **1,639 churches and organisations** that are already part of our partner networks, **288 new churches** and an estimated **5,680 churches** joined through at least **10 larger church bodies**.

We estimate a total of **772,283 people** took part in the World Weekend of Prayer across **23 countries**, including those who joined through larger church bodies.

The **204,283 participants** at network events can be broken down as:

93,517 children

87,305 adults

23,461 unknown ages

Viva's Resource Distribution:

- **1,872 people** accessed the **World Weekend of Prayer website** page between 1st April – 30th June 2020, spending an average of **4.36 minutes** on the page.
- **Resources** developed and circulated in **13 languages**.
- **'Hands to Serve You' song** received **1,490 views** across **50 countries**.
- **715 people** chose to receive the **Prayer Diary** through email, Facebook and Twitter.
- A total of **603 views** on our **animation videos** showing the healing of the Paralysed man.

Hundreds of thousands of people join together to pray for children as part of the World Weekend of prayer. We will never know the true extent of the reach, especially with so many events now taking place online.

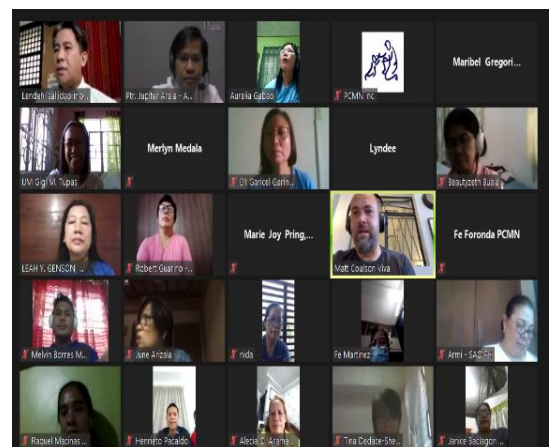
We have used feedback forms from 28 partner networks and 6 other independent participants to make up this report.

Impacts from Covid-19

Due to sudden restrictions from the Covid-19 global pandemic, most of the plans for the World Weekend of Prayer had to be adapted at short notice. This meant the majority of events happened online using social media and live streams.

- This expanded the reach in many regions, as people who would not normally be able to attend church events, or would not want to, could join in. It also strengthened many network communities and gave them a shared identity as national networks. Examples can be seen below.
- Having said that, some regions faced difficulties with moving online as many people do not have internet access, so some events unfortunately saw a decline in participation. Technology provided a barrier more prominently in Cuba, Delhi (India), Argentina and Tanzania.

This was the first time that **Red Viva Bolivia** held events online. They found it to be very successful, as it was



The Philippines

powerful to have many projects and churches from multiple cities participating in the same event.

Prayer resources were sent out digitally in **Red Viva Costa Rica** and children shared prayer requests digitally which were distributed to churches to be prayed for over the weekend. Similarly **Red Viva Nicaragua** set up a Facebook page dedicated to prayer requests which were picked up by Church leaders and individuals. Children also provided prayer requests through their churches.

Children at Risk Action Network (CRANE), Uganda produced a recording and created the 'Hands to Serve Him' video.

Some families could still pray together in person over the weekend. Families still often received resources or guidance on what to pray for so they still felt connected to the larger event. This was the case for our partner networks in **Guatemala, Zimbabwe, Cambodia, Cuba, Paraguay, Columbia, Argentina and Ranchi & Hyderabad, India.**



Events and Activities

Even during the Covid-19 pandemic, our partner networks have been able to design their own events to mobilise their communities to pray for children globally. These events were aided by Viva resources, which included a talk summary, a song, a prayer diary and a video clip of Jesus healing the paralysed man. All resources were available in English and Spanish, and many were also translated into additional languages such as Hindi and Tamil. Here is a selection of the initiatives.

Red Viva El Salvador produced 14 additional YouTube videos, one of which was produced in 3 languages.

Viva Children @ Risk Network Patna, India and **Viva Shillong Network, India** reached out to Children's homes during the World Weekend of Prayer so they could still hold events even during the Covid-19 lockdown.

In **The Philippines** they broadcasted their World Weekend of Prayer Programmes using a radio to overcome the Covid-19 restrictions.



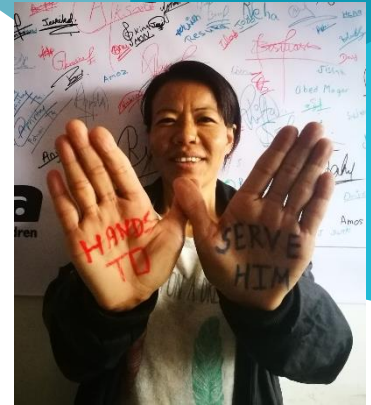
The Philippines

In **Children at Risk Action Network (CRANE), Uganda** children loved taking part in practical activities which brought bible stories to life. These included drawing, reading, singing, dancing, praying, acting and playing games. Children and adults also washed each other's feet, symbolising the heart of service we should all have for each other. A children's worker said that during the event children got a better understanding of how God loves and cares so much about each and every one of his children. The children committed to share God's love with other people,

especially the vulnerable, by praying for them and extending a hand of care whenever there is a need. They took turns to pray and give thanks to the Lord. Their church has since committed to do similar activities each week during their services.

A 15-hour prayer chain and daily conferences were carried out using Facebook by **Red Viva Mexico**. People made videos which were shared on the network's ministry page.

Prior to the event **CarNetNepal** issued a challenge for people to take a photo with the words 'Hands to Serve Him' written on their hands and to post on Facebook about the World Weekend of Prayer. They then produced videos featuring two popular Nepalese cartoon characters explaining how the *Nepal* World Weekend of Prayer started in Nepal. They also used songs with actions, puppets and games in their programme.



Churches connected to **Red Viva Honduras** participated in the World Weekend of Prayer by encouraging children to develop murals and games, focusing on using our hands for the service of God. During their services they prayed whilst symbolically washing each other's feet. They then placed prayer requests in floating lamps which were thrown into the air, symbolising that all of our requests reach heaven.

Building Partnerships

During the World Weekend of Prayer five of our partner networks joined forces with larger organisations, denominations or church bodies, encouraging them to promote and participate in the World Weekend of Prayer. This significantly increased the reach of our campaign, resulting in an estimated additional **568,000 people** joining together in prayer for vulnerable children. These partnerships included:

- **Red Viva Costa Rica** who partnered with Moviendo Esperanz and the Federacion de Alianza Evangelica de Costa Rica. This resulted in over 800 new churches joining the World Weekend of Prayer.
- **Viva Network of Columbia** who had an estimated additional 500 churches taking part thanks to their partnerships with Movement for Children in Colombia and Christ for the City and Conviventia.
- **Children At Risk Network (CRANE), Uganda** partnered with The Church of Uganda and The Baptist Union of Uganda, who together connected over 2000 churches with our World Weekend of Prayer campaign. The Church of Uganda also used our World Weekend of Prayer resources to guide their



Nigeria

month of prayer for children which was promoted on TV and on the radio. The Archbishop even prayed for children live on national TV during the Sunday service

These partnerships also help raise the profile of our partner networks and enhance their reputations, which in turn increases their national influence to promote positive change.

Increasing Connections for Networks

The World Weekend of Prayer consistently gains momentum as networks join with other people and organisations in their communities. Together they can better serve vulnerable people and raise children up in prayer.

Following a zoom meeting held by **Shine Children Hyderabad Network, India** on the World Weekend of Prayer, a Pastor was impressed with the event so used our resources for his next sermon and spent over an hour praying for children at risk with his church. As a church they then decided to support children living in slum communities through free tuition and free meals for those students. Following lockdown, they are looking into providing a tuition centre in his church for underprivileged children.

Red Viva Bolivia sent prayer information out 30 days before the event on social media and email. These prayer points even reached churches in other countries and a Biblical Seminary also asked to use the material in its discipleship classes.

After engaging with the World Weekend of Prayer run by **Red Viva Argentina**, one woman introduced the network to a group of men who were helping children at risk because their parents suffered with alcohol problems. They also prepare meals multiple times a week to feed 20 families. Following this introduction Red Viva Argentina has been able to discuss how they can support this work in the future, including the possibility of providing training for them.

Mwanza Children Action Network (MCAN), Tanzania had a new organisation join the network following the World Weekend of Prayer – they want to contribute to MCAN’s good work as they serve the communities around them.

In the past **Asha Forum Bangalore, India** has experienced many churches feeling called to pray, but not offering any additional practical support. They have since seen the Holy spirit driving these churches into action – many of them have approached the network asking to support their work further. Last year Asha Forum Bangalore worked with over 27 such churches, particularly by helping them develop Quality Improvement Systems.

A number of other independent churches and individuals also joined our World Weekend of Prayer. People from the **UK, Slovakia, Brazil, Nigeria** and **South**



Nigeria

Africa joined us in praying for vulnerable children, having heard about the event through Viva emails. Some used our literature in their church services, others prayed in orphanages and prayer groups and yet more reached out to friends worldwide to pray together for Viva's work and vulnerable children.

Improvement Suggestions

Overall, the World Weekend was a huge success and we received very positive feedback. Our partner networks found the resources very helpful and they managed to adapt really well to working virtually due to the impacts of Covid-19. Having said that, we have received some suggestions of how to further improve the event in the future:

- Combining online and offline events would enable more people to be involved and maximise outreach.
- Providing resources 3 months in advance would allow networks to share them more widely and plan more thoroughly.
- Creating separate resources aimed at adults and children would be beneficial. This year the resources were excellent for engaging and teaching children, however additional resources aimed at adults to provide prayer guidance on the needs of vulnerable children and Viva's work would be useful.
- There has been a suggestion that finding funding to provide bibles for children who have taken part would be excellent.
- Some requested more themes/resources for churches to use throughout the year.

Testimonies from the World Weekend of Prayer

We have heard so many encouraging stories of God's faithfulness from the weekend. Here are some of the amazing provisions we have seen.

Red Viva Costa Rica held a prayer event where a 9-year-old boy prayed for his father who had struggled with an alcohol and aggression problem for some time. The following week the Lord answered his prayers. The boy's father approached the pastor asking for help to change, so he could make amends and reconcile himself with God.

Many stories of families being offered communal housing and food support have been reported from **Red Viva El Salvador**. The families have been praising God for this ongoing provision which has enabled them to escape dangerous living situations caused by tropical storms and precarious housing. One example is of 2 children whose house was destroyed by flooding. Following the family's prayers for protection during the World Weekend of Prayer, their church has been able to offer them, along with other families facing similar situations, temporary accommodation in



The Philippines

school facilities. Another family's house was destroyed from a tree falling in the storm, but church members have united to rebuild the damage.

Red Viva Nicaragua saw food provision for children who petitioned for food because their parents had been left without work. The food donations they received were enough to provide a basic food basket for each of their 60 families.

The father of a teenager who lives in a slum in the intervention area of **Delhi Network, India** recently lost his job, putting his family in financial trouble. The teenager started to pray to God for his father's situation and to his joy his father soon got a job as a security supervisor, which was a better position than his previous job. Through the World Weekend of Prayer this family came to trust that God does answer their prayers.

Following the World Weekend of Prayer in Zimbabwe a group of women were motivated to help vulnerable people in their local area. **Viva Network Zimbabwe** were then able to connect them with a vulnerable mother who needed help after giving birth to triplets. They were able to provide some supplies, money and ongoing support for this mother and her children. 10 churches also provided food for families who were struggling due to the Covid-19 Pandemic. The network estimates that at least 30 families per church received assistance.

A 13-year-old girl shared her story with **Viva Children @ Risk Network Patna, India**. She used to put herself first and never helped her siblings or friends. After she attended a World Weekend of Prayer Zoom event where her pastor shared a sermon on 'Hands to serve Him', she realised that helping other people does not make her a servant, but it gives her the opportunity to be kind and do great work. She learnt that believing in Christ means following His ways by helping others, just as Jesus did.

Similar stories of the transformation of children's behaviour following their increased awareness of the problems other children face, has been seen in many churches following the World Weekend of Prayer, including **Asha Forum Bangalore, India**. It has even moved some children to pray daily for others around the world who face greater hardships.

To End, some words of encouragement from some of those who took part

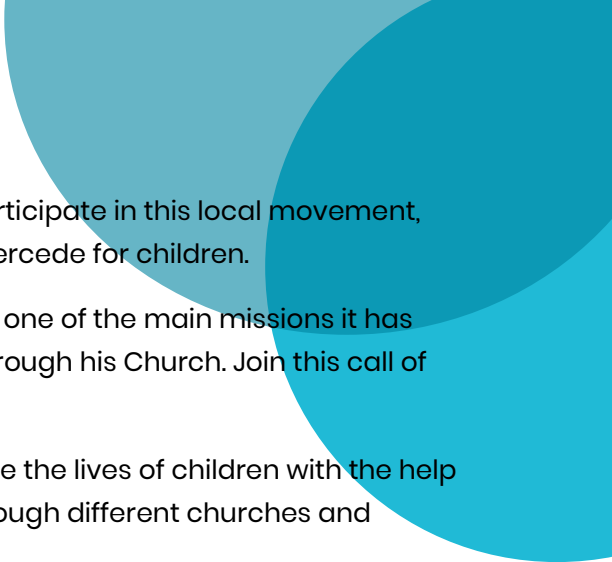
Costa Rica: Through children's prayer requests we can listen to their hearts and use these requests to pray to the Lord about their needs and that their lives could be transformed.

Honduras: In unity there is faith, in faith there is strength, in strength we find Love and God Is Love. The more we get together to pray, the more powerful and effective our prayers will be.

Argentina: Networking gives us a clearer vision of the needs that children have so that we can have greater results.



Cambodia



Bolivia: You don't need to be in the same room to pray and participate in this local movement, there are always creative ways we can come together and intercede for children.

Paraguay: The Church's commitment to vulnerable children is one of the main missions it has and they urgently need to feel God's love and helping arms. Through his Church. Join this call of God.

Ranchi, India: Only through the power of prayer can we change the lives of children with the help of the Holy Spirit. WWP is the best way to reach the children through different churches and organizations.

Uganda: This is a life changing event that gets us to view our world from God's perspective! It is good to come together and dedicate our hands to be used unto God and to pray for all children who are suffering worldwide.

Nigeria: Praying together with children gives us the opportunity to learn from their simplicity and love to serve God.