



CHILD PROTECTION | Big Dream to End Child Marriage

Progress Report

October 2025–March 2026

OUR APPROACH

Childhood shouldn't end with a marriage ceremony. In Kenya and Bangladesh, too many girls' childhoods still do—cut short, with consequences that last a lifetime.

World Vision's Big Dream to End Child Marriage partners with families, faith leaders, and communities to address the root causes of child marriage, and we're already seeing real results.

In the first half of fiscal year 2026, World Vision staff worked closely with local partners to shift harmful cultural norms and strengthen systems that safeguard girls' futures.

"When I first visited Nakaalei village in Turkana last year, I saw many girls adorned with beads as symbols of futures already decided," said Lemmy Sanei, a World Vision project manager in Kenya. "Today, reality is changing. More girls are now in school, and our collective efforts are bearing fruit."

Five pillar approach

Big Dream to End Child Marriage takes a multisector approach to prevent child

marriage and extreme poverty through five integrated pillars.

- **Behavior change:** Families and communities demonstrate social norms and practices that are equitable for women and girls.
- **Education access:** Girls gain access to quality education and life-skills training.
- **Economic empowerment:** Economic pressures driving child marriage are reduced through savings groups and microfinance support.
- **Water and sanitation access:** Barriers to girls' education are reduced by improving access to clean water and equipping schools with menstrual hygiene facilities.
- **Strengthened child protection systems:** Legal and policy frameworks to prevent child marriage are in place, resourced, and enforced.



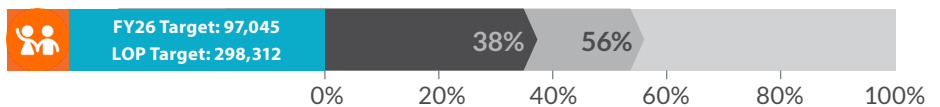
"I was about to lose all my hopes and dreams when my family decided to stop my studies ... it felt like I would become a dead tree," Anika (pictured) shared. "But the school stipend program is a blessing to me. Having the chance to study again feels like making a dead tree bloom."

Through Big Dream to End Child Marriage, education stipends in Bangladesh help girls like Anika stay in school.

FY26 SEMIANNUAL (OCT 2025-MARCH 2026) GLOBAL UPDATE & PROGRESS ON CORE ACTIVITIES

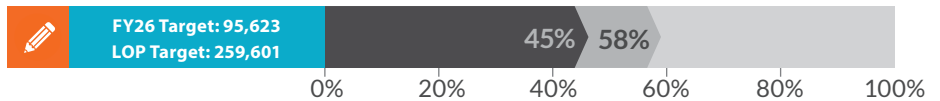
Behavior change

54,153 individuals reached



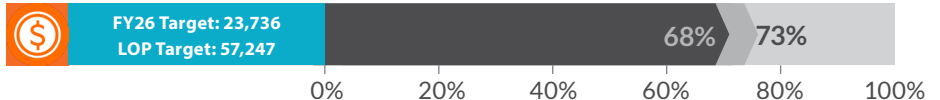
Education access

55,072 individuals reached



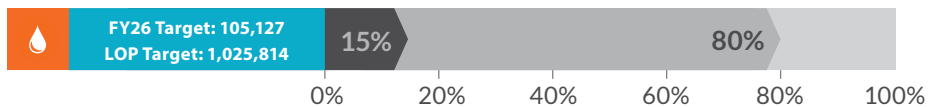
Economic empowerment

17,383 individuals reached



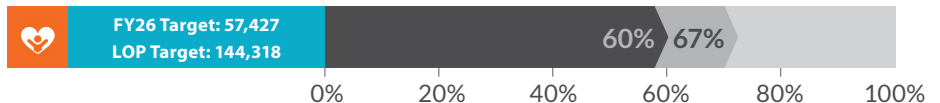
Water and sanitation access

84,370 individuals reached



Child protection systems strengthening

38,366 individuals reached



%

Life of Project (LOP) 2024-2030 target percentage achieved

%

FY26 Annual target percentage achieved

Gaining ground: first half of FY26

Across Kenya and Bangladesh, more families are choosing education over early marriage for their daughters, and communities are holding leaders accountable for girls' futures. Girls themselves are finding their voices—and using them to protect their own futures and those of girls around them.

In total, the program reached 120,260 participants in the first half of FY26, including more than 58,600 women and girls. Every number points to a girl with a future worth protecting.

- **In Kenya**, schools supported by the program kept 98% of students enrolled, savings groups grew to 9,082 active members who mobilized more than \$337,000, and program staff connected 650 girls at risk of child marriage to child protective services. Police stations in West Pokot, Turkana, and Samburu now have child-friendly desks, making it easier for children and families to report abuse and access support. The program also urged county governments to increase education and social services budgets, multiplying impact beyond the program's own resources.
- **In Bangladesh**, 2,320 adolescent girls completed life-skills training, and 2,517 girls received education stipends that helped them stay in school and avoid child marriage. Communities throughout Cox's Bazar district declared 14 areas free of child marriage, and community groups directly prevented 105 child marriages. Local leaders also revitalized 28 of 29 Child Marriage Prevention Committees to address gaps in how communities enforce child marriage laws and work together, helping local communities better protect children.

These gains point to a broader shift—one where girls, families, faith leaders, local officials, and communities are working together to keep girls in school and protect them from child marriage.

Navigating challenges

Meaningful change rarely follows a straight path. In both countries, we encountered serious disruptions. Yet we met each one with targeted, on-the-ground responses, leaning on local relationships and community structures to keep the work moving.

- **In Kenya**, drought displaced families and disrupted planned activities, while intercommunal conflict limited access in some areas. Teams responded by tracing mobile households, deepening partnerships with local leaders, and keeping girls connected to learning opportunities.
- **In Bangladesh**, unstable political conditions, national elections, extended holidays, delayed government approvals, and government officials' limited availability slowed several activities. Teams adapted by coordinating closely with schools, families, faith leaders, local government partners, and community groups to sustain activities and maintain trust with communities.

Looking ahead: second half of FY26

- **In Kenya**, the program will deepen community conversations, expand accelerated learning programs for girls who have fallen behind in school, and strengthen savings groups so families can keep girls in school.
- **In Bangladesh**, we will expand life-skills training and improve school-based water, sanitation, and hygiene—including menstrual hygiene support—to reduce barriers to girls' education. The program will also continue working with local leaders and child protection committees to prevent child marriage.

Your partnership helps sustain this progress. Every girl who completes her education, every community that takes a stand, and every family that chooses economic resilience over child marriage are proof of what your investment makes possible.

KENYA

In the first half of FY26, Big Dream to End Child Marriage reached 67,403 people in seven counties in Kenya.

More girls stayed in school, families strengthened their incomes, and local leaders created safer ways for children to report harm.

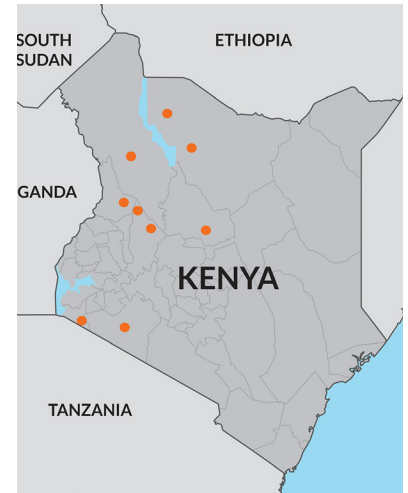
Behavior change: More than 6,400 community members joined Community Change dialogues, where they spoke openly about harmful practices, discussed the risks girls face, and built stronger support for girls' education. Faith leaders also used their influence to protect children. "As faith leaders, our voices have great influence in the community," said Pastor Ekiru from Turkana. "I now speak openly against child marriage and guide my congregation to uphold the dignity and rights of every child."

Education access: When girls stay in school, they are less likely to face child marriage. World Vision worked with schools, families, community leaders, and local government partners to keep children in school. Through back-to-school campaigns, education subsidies, school materials, and dignity packs (menstrual hygiene supplies that help girls stay in class), the program kept 159,351 of 161,899 students enrolled—98% retention rate—helped 942 students return after dropping out, and saw 156,935 advance to the next grade. "Before receiving the dignity packs, I used to miss school every month," said Akiru, 15, from Turkana. "Now I attend all my classes, and I want to finish my education."

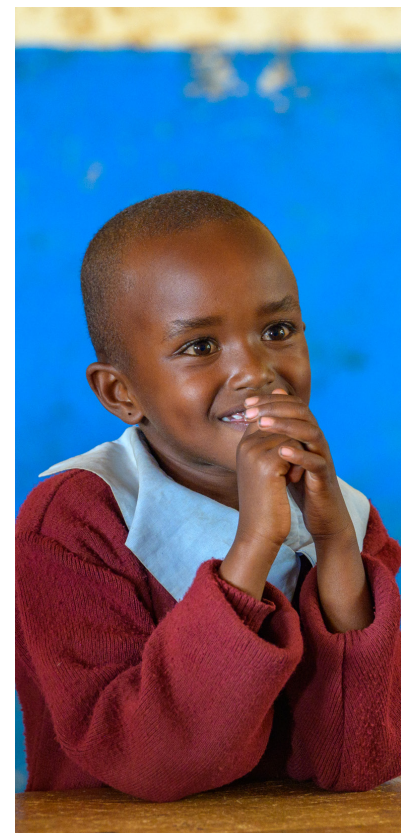
Economic empowerment: Savings groups grew to 9,082 active members—up from 6,584 in FY25—and mobilized more than \$337,000 in savings. Families used loans, business training, and Biblical Empowered Worldview (BEWV) lessons to increase their income and ease the financial pressure that can lead to child marriage. "BEWV changed the way I see myself and my life," said Jereman, a mother of two from Turkana. "My children are continuing well with their education, and that gives me great joy and hope for their future."

Water and sanitation access: Communities gained access to clean water through newly constructed and rehabilitated water systems, reaching 16,265 people. As children spent less time collecting water, enrollment at Barambate Primary School grew from 36 to 130 students.

Child protection systems strengthening: Police stations in West Pokot, Turkana, and Samburu now have child-friendly desks, giving children and families a safer way to report abuse. Trained staff and volunteers identified at-risk girls, worked with families, and connected children to support. Referrals rose from 612 in FY25 to 1,829. With World Vision's support, community advocacy groups petitioned county governments—who responded by increasing education and social services budgets by over \$3.4 million. Together, these efforts helped protect 650 girls from child marriage.



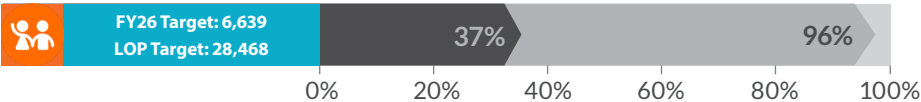
*In Kenya, we will reach **469,700** people, including **245,380** women and girls over six years.*



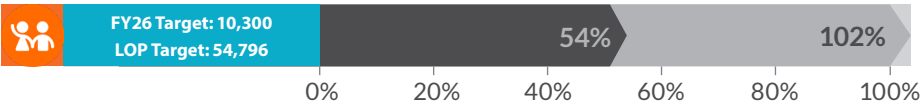
FY26 SEMIANNUAL PROGRESS ON CORE ACTIVITIES IN KENYA*

Behavior change

6,403 individuals (3,847 women and 2,556 men) participated in behavior-change programs

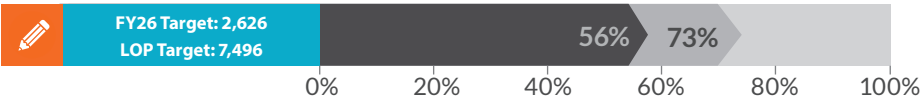


10,448 individuals (6,438 women and 4,010 men) participated in Biblical Empowered Worldview programs

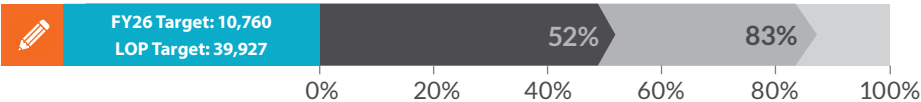


Education access

1,924 individuals (1,549 girls and 375 boys) completed formal education (primary, secondary, or vocational)

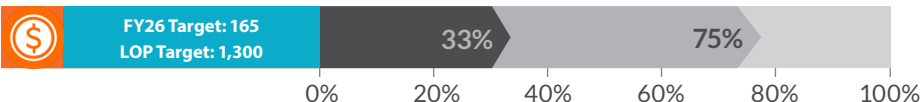


8,945 individuals (5,057 girls and 3,888 boys) completed life-skills training



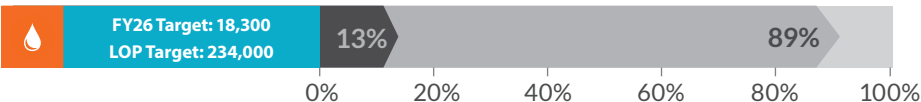
Economic empowerment

123 savings groups (9,082 members total; 975 women ages 18–25; 6,351 women over 25; 245 men ages 18–25; 1,511 men over 25)



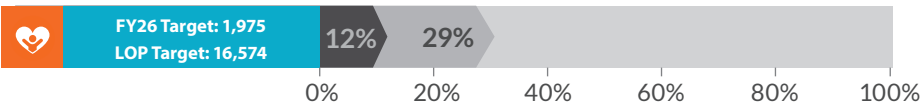
Water and sanitation access

16,265 individuals (8,282 women and 7,983 men) gained access to a basic drinking water collection point in communities



Child protection systems strengthening

583 community members (257 women and 326 men) trained on how to respond to child protection incidents



% Life of Project (LOP) 2024–2030 target percentage achieved % FY26 Annual target percentage achieved

*The numbers in this chart reflect only the participants counted in the listed indicators, not the total participants in each pillar.

STORY OF IMPACT: THE PRACTICE ENDS HERE



For nearly 30 years, Cheposera, pictured, carried a painful legacy. As a female cutter in Kenya, she performed female genital mutilation (FGM) on more than 400 girls—a practice passed down through the women in her family like an inheritance. “I used to earn 50 cents for every girl when I started the practice,” she recalled. “The amount increased gradually and by the time I was abandoning it I was earning about \$12 per girl. It became part of how I survived.” Yet even then, she knew it was hurting girls. She just didn’t know how to stop.

When World Vision’s Big Dream to End Child Marriage program—then called Kenya Big Dream—launched community change classes in a neighboring village in 2021, participants carried home a simple but persistent message: it’s time to protect girls. Cheposera heard it. “It didn’t take much convincing,” she said. “Deep down, I always knew this practice harmed girls.”

Story continued on page 8

BANGLADESH

In the first half of FY26, Big Dream to End Child Marriage reached 52,801 people in Cox's Bazar district in Bangladesh. Girls built confidence, families kept daughters in school, and local leaders strengthened how communities protect children.

Behavior change: Faith and community leaders stepped into their roles as advocates for girls. Through training and dialogue, 400 faith and community leaders, including Muslim, Hindu, Christian, and Buddhist representatives, gained tools to challenge harmful cultural practices and share child protection messages in religious gatherings and community sessions. The program and local partners also reached 21,755 people through community awareness campaigns, dialogue sessions, and parenting programs. Despite political instability and national elections, 14 communities in Cox's Bazar district were declared child-marriage-free.

Education access: With education stipends, 2,517 vulnerable girls covered school costs and stayed in school. In 24 schools, girls used hygiene corners stocked with sanitary supplies to manage their menstrual cycle with confidence and stay in class. Through life-skills training, 2,320 girls built the communication, decision-making, and problem-solving skills they need to shape their own futures.

Economic empowerment: World Vision worked with 400 ultra-poor households, providing conditional cash

to start income-generating activities such as goat and poultry rearing and small businesses. Before receiving support, each family agreed not to marry their daughters early and to keep them in school. From last year's vocational training cohort, 60 young women who had left school now run home-based tailoring businesses, with some earning \$21 to \$24 a month. In addition, 300 families accessed interest-free Child Marriage Prevention Loans, with about 97% repaying regularly.

Water and sanitation access: To help girls stay healthy and in class, World Vision and school partners reached 3,480 girls with menstrual hygiene sessions and essential materials. We also formed 24 school-based water, sanitation, and health committees. In the second half of FY26, we will expand water and sanitation work so girls can stay in class with dignity.

Child protection systems strengthening: Local leaders reactivated 28 Child Marriage Prevention Committees, strengthening local systems to identify and respond to cases. These committees, together with community child protection groups and local stakeholders, helped prevent 37 marriages since October 2025, bringing the total to 105. We also established 35 reporting and referral mechanisms meeting minimum standards for safe, child-friendly reporting and referral to services. Cox's Bazar Sadar Police Station now has its own child help desk, providing a safer place for children and families to report abuse.



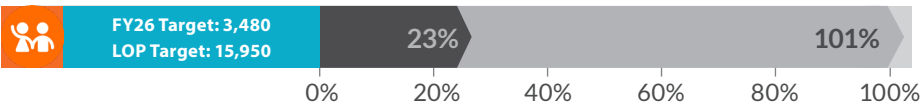
*In Bangladesh, we will reach **190,092 people, including 95,805 women and girls over four years.***



FY26 SEMIANNUAL PROGRESS ON CORE ACTIVITIES IN BANGLADESH*

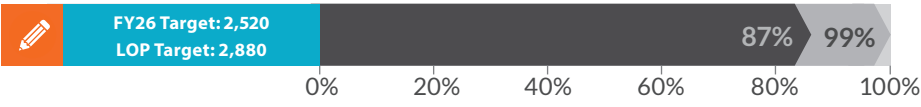
Behavior change

3,741 individuals (2,346 women and 1,395 men) participated in behavior-change programs

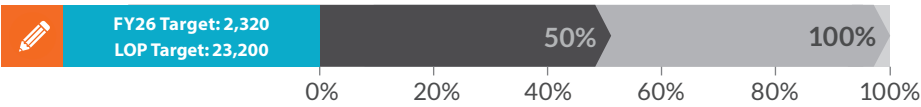


Education access

2,517 girls completed formal education (primary, secondary, or vocational)

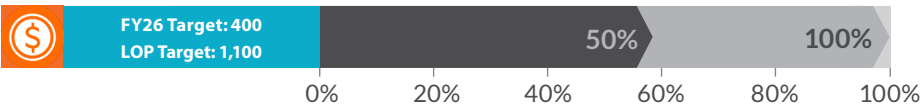


2,320 girls completed life-skills training



Economic empowerment

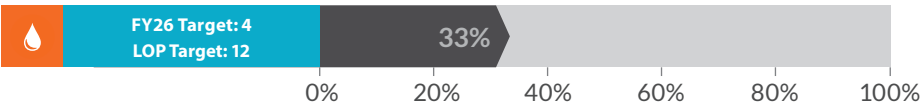
400 households received conditional cash transfer



Water and sanitation access

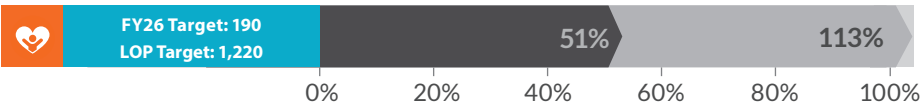
0 education facilities gained access to adequate menstrual hygiene facilities

(The team will complete this activity in the second half of FY26)



Child protection systems strengthening

216 community members (government and police officials) trained on how to respond to child protection incidents



% Life of Project (LOP) 2024-2030 target percentage achieved % FY26 Annual target percentage achieved

*The numbers in this chart reflect only the participants counted in the listed indicators, not the total participants in each pillar.

STORY OF IMPACT: NIHARIKA FINDS HER VOICE



Niharika, 17, a 12th-grade student in Cox’s Bazar, has become a source of inspiration in her community. Alongside her peers, she helped stop two child marriages—both girls are now back in school with renewed hope. Knowing that poverty pushes families toward early marriage, she and her peers gave school materials to 30 students from the most vulnerable families, helping them stay in school and out of reach of child marriage. Her journey was not easy.

She wanted to help but didn’t know how to start. With support from World Vision, she found her path—and her voice. Where hesitation once held her back, confidence now drives her to speak boldly, lead her peers, and plan for her community’s future.

Today, Niharika takes action to protect other girls from child marriage and ensure they can continue their education. As she shared, “Now I can call government offices to stop child marriage. Earlier, it was only a dream.”

STORY OF IMPACT: THE PRACTICE ENDS HERE *CONTINUED*

The full weight of that harm didn't settle until community change classes reached Cheposera's own village in 2025. "That is when I understood the full harm—not just of FGM, but of child marriage," she said. "I regretted many things. The biggest was not taking my children to school." Seven of her eight children never entered a classroom. She had already identified her successor as a cutter—a younger female relative, as tradition dictated. But when she abandoned the practice, she refused to pass it on. "This harmful practice ends with me," she said firmly. "There will be no cutters in my family after me."



The classes also helped her begin to heal. One of her first actions was convincing her son to re-enroll his daughter—who had dropped out—into an accelerated learning program. He agreed.

Today, Cheposera uses her voice to protect girls. Every week, she gathers with groups of women—especially younger mothers—to talk about the dangers of child marriage and FGM (pictured above). Her credibility is hard-



won: she is not an outsider delivering a message, but a woman who lived inside the practice and chose to walk away. "As a community, we must end harmful practices ourselves. We cannot wait for outsiders to change our lives," she said.

She has also rebuilt her financial footing, joining a savings group in 2022. She rears chickens and sells vegetables, saving enough to pay her youngest son's school fees—something she wishes she had done for all her children. "Let's give girls the chance to go to school," she said. "Let's help them achieve the potential God put in them."



THANK YOU

Chacha didn't always see protecting girls as his responsibility. The community leader from Kenya now does: "I used to think decisions about girls were not my concern, but now I see that protecting their future is my responsibility. ... I speak out in my community, support families, and ensure girls can stay in school—because when girls thrive, we all thrive."

Through World Vision's Big Dream to End Child Marriage program, community leaders like Chacha are stepping up to challenge harmful norms and take action. And they are not alone—communities across Kenya and Bangladesh are coming together to protect children and choose a different future. As one community member shared, "Before, we waited for others to bring solutions, but now we sit together as a community ... and take action ourselves. We are determined to change, protect our children, and build a better future."



A teacher guides two girls from West Pokot through the Accelerated Learning Program as they catch up on their studies.

This work reflects a shared belief that every girl is created with dignity, purpose, and God-given potential. Families are supporting their daughters' education. Communities are standing up to protect their children. And girls are stepping into the futures God intends for them.

Because of your partnership, this change is taking root and growing stronger. Thank you for your generosity, advocacy, and commitment. Together, you are helping ensure that more girls can experience the childhood—and the future—they deserve.



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**75 YEARS OF
BELIEF**



World Vision is a Christian humanitarian organization dedicated to working with children, families, and their communities worldwide to reach their full potential by tackling the causes of poverty and injustice. Motivated by our faith in Jesus Christ, we serve alongside the poor and oppressed as a demonstration of God's unconditional love for all people. World Vision serves all people, regardless of religion, race, ethnicity, or gender.

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bigdream](https://worldvision.org/bigdream)**

Child Protection_Big Dream to End Child Marriage_Report FY26 Semiannual

Summary	Project-to-Date Spending	Project-to-Date Budget	Project-to-Date Spending Rate
Bangladesh Big Dream to End Child Marriage	\$ 3,180,173	\$ 4,712,843	68%
Kenya Big Dream to End Child Marriage	\$ 15,518,919	\$ 22,899,433	68%
Total Spending To Date	\$ 18,699,092	\$ 27,612,276	68%