

World Weekend of Prayer for Children at Risk

➤ 2019 Report

Over a million people and 9,766 churches around the world joined in with the 2019 World Weekend of Prayer for Children at Risk – and that is only the people reached through our partner networks...



9,766

Churches



588,422

People at events



622,015

People online

The theme of this year's World Weekend of Prayer was **'Filled with Hope'**. We believe that God is not just ever-present in the suffering, hurt and poverty facing children around the world; but is working in and through this suffering and providing hope in their lives.

Children and adults prayed for children in their communities, cities and other cities around the world, bringing hope into issues that children are facing.

Viva Network Reach

32 initiatives run by our partner networks

Engaging **1,791 churches** that are already part of the networks and **7,001 churches** that are not currently part of the network, often through partnering with denominations and Evangelical Alliances

588,422 people took part in the World Weekend of Prayer events and

622,015 people were reached by online and social media campaigns in

24 countries

Participants can be broken down as:

348,549 children

130,089 adults

9,766 churches and ministries

Hundreds of thousands of people pray for children as part of the World Weekend of prayer and we will never know the true extent of the reach. Out of the 2,684 people who looked up World Weekend of Prayer resources and the 700 who directly received the materials on request, we gathered reports from 32 partner networks and their feedback makes up the detail in this report.

Viva's resource distribution

2,684 people viewed the **World Weekend of Prayer website** page, downloading materials and spending an average of 4 minutes looking on the page

Resources developed and circulated in **12 languages**

700 requests from individuals, churches and organisations for World Weekend of Prayer **materials**

65 people signed up to receive the **Hope Diary** (a daily prayer email in the month leading up to the week)

732 YouTube views of 3 animation videos, averaging 244 views per video

Maximising partnerships

Six of our partner networks joined forces with larger organisations, denominations or bodies, encouraging them to promote the World Weekend of Prayer with their contacts and contribute to greater reach of the campaign.

To give some examples:

Red Viva Argentina partnered with ACIERA (the Christian Alliance of Evangelical Churches of the Argentine Republic) who encouraged the 12,000 churches they represent across Argentina to take part in the campaign.

Red Viva Cost Rica engaged with Evangelical Alliance and Samaritan's Purse reaching an additional 970 churches and organisations outside of the network to take part in the campaign.

Viva Network Zimbabwe partnered with the Evangelical Fellowship of Zimbabwe who promoted the World Weekend of Prayer with its 500 church congregations.

These partnerships serve as an effective marketing tool for the programme, enhance the reputation of the network and increase national influence, with thousands more children and churches praying than the network could mobilise on its own.

Local and Global

Throughout the weekend, churches raised their voices in prayer for children in their communities and issues facing children around the world.

Our partner network in **Manila, the Philippines**, combined the World Weekend of Prayer with an 'Operation Safe' event to pray for vulnerable children affected by a fire disaster in the city, bringing hope into this specific situation. In a separate event, the network highlighted local issues of children in their city; with statistics, stories and prayer points laid out on separate stations around the room to facilitate prayer.



Lalitpur, Nepal

In **Kampala, Uganda**, our partner network used balloons to facilitate prayer around the world.

Children wrote the names of different countries on balloons, and each church member then held the hand of a child and a balloon and used this to pray with the children for children in the country written on the balloon. The children also prayed for the challenges and topics on their hearts with the adults.

Our new partner network in **Belem, Brazil**, used social media to facilitate prayers for children around the world. They exchanged prayer requests between five other Portuguese-speaking countries not connected to Viva, allowing them to pray into specific situations affecting children in other countries throughout the weekend.

For next year, the networks in **Managua (Nicaragua)**, **Villavicencio (Colombia)** and **Mwanza (Tanzania)** all mentioned a desire to increase virtual communication between network members during and before the weekend. This innovative thought shows how excited networks are about the World Weekend of Prayer and how they want it to continue to grow.

Events and Activities



Panama City, Panama

Around the world, churches and organisations who are part of our partner networks, as well as those who are not yet part of network membership, organised a number of different events to facilitate prayer and bring hope into the situations facing children in their communities and around the world.

Church Services

Increased visibility and promotion of children in church services has been seen over the world in our partner networks. In **San José, Costa Rica** the churches in the network changed the structure of their normal service to focus around children, with all the churches across their network **joining in prayer for children at a specific time in the morning**. Before the weekend they also collected prayer requests from the different churches, in order to pray into specific situations in their city.

Our partner network in **Siem Reap, Cambodia**, also had a child-focused service, with children playing a large role in **leading the service, leading worship, preaching and leading the prayers** for the congregation. They said the children were so enthusiastic and proud because of the opportunity to lead activities and pray, and felt so empowered being on the stage leading the service.



San Jose, Costa Rica

In many church services across our partner networks, children also **performed skits and plays based around the Bible stories in the material, performed songs, danced and sang**. These were in **Lusaka (Zambia), Kampala (Uganda) and Bangalore and Patna (India)**.

In **Lalitpur, Nepal**, the network facilitated prayer during a service by having **prayer stations**, with different issues affecting children in Nepal and prayer points for these. The congregation moved round the stations in groups as part of the service. In **Patna, India** the network used a **prayer tree** to facilitate prayer for children in the community.

Workshops and family activities

Our partner networks in **Bolivia** held a number of **church awareness workshops** on 'Prayer Commitment' and 'Generation that Transforms'. These called churches, family and society more generally to commit to prayer for children and adolescents in their community. During the event the children and adults both prayed for each other, and at the end of the event the children and adults wrote their prayers on a piece of paper and tied them to a helium balloon and together threw the balloons into the air and 'up to heaven'.

In **Havana, Cuba** the network did a family activity called 'The Power of Words', which meets to give families quality time together through games and lessons.

Outreach events

The World Weekend of Prayer has been used as a witness to many communities as part of church outreach around the world.

Our partner network in **Lusaka, Zambia**, held a number of outreach events as part of their World Weekend of Prayer. One of the churches met in a **local school**, where hundreds of children participated in prayer for themselves and children in their city. They also did a **food drive for a local orphanage** and prayed with the children when they were receiving their donation. As this is a new partner network, the organisers were excited at the level of collaboration between churches and organisations, which had not happened before.

Our partner network in **Patna, India**, also visited schools – they did their first prayer event in a **government home**. They were able to pray for the girls in the home and share with them a message of hope.

Gatherings and marches were also used to minister into the cities. The network in **Siem Reap, Cambodia** gathered to celebrate International Children’s Day, where they invited children to pray for their needs.

In **Calabozo, Venezuela** the network carried out a prayer activity in an area with a high number of orphans, formed a human cross with the children, and prayed for them. *“They said that they were feeling tired, and spoke of their needs, from things that would seem basic to us, but for them are not. The greatest testimony is that each of them prayed.”*



Tegucigalpa, Honduras

In **Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic** they **formed teams of children who visited shops**, and homes around their community, and using posters inviting those present to pray together for children; telling those around them what children need prayer for, and the issues effecting children in their cities. Those who they spoke to had a positive response expressing that they understand more the need to pray for children with new understanding of their needs.

For next year, the network in **Nemby, Paraguay** has requested increased information and resources to further promote outreach events in the community.

Impact

The impact of the World Weekend of Prayer was not just in the unity displayed across the networks, and the power of prayer itself, but also in changes that will be made as a result of events.

In **San Jose, Costa Rica**, two non-network churches who were involved in the weekend's prayer events have committed to **increase the prominence of children in their church**, and in their evangelism and community outreach.

The impact of the weekend on churches is also seen in **Bangalore, India**. Pastor Stanley who attended their event said it was an *“eye-opener of how they shouldn't be counting children as small but see them as **children of God and raise them up with the hope that they can do mighty things for the Lord**”*. Two other Pastors, Pastor Santha Kumar and Pastor Swaroop, said after the event that they would streamline their work with children and take seriously initiatives to stand up against issues concerning children, starting with the children in their congregations.

After the two-hour prayer programme and worship event that the network in **Lalitpur, Nepal** organised; Pastor Dilip, who attended, said that he had *“never heard about such a prayer day”*, and after attending the programme he was *“very blessed and realised how important it is to pray for the children together in one spirit”*, and is committed to pray for children at risk in his personal prayer and with his church family in the weekly service.



Patna, India

Swaroopa, who attended a prayer meeting for children at risk in **Hyderabad, India**, on the World Weekend Day of Prayer said that it was the first time that she has meaningfully understood the situations facing children in her community, and those children who are at risk. She committed to continually pray for children at risk and committed to help support the costs of a child who have been orphaned to complete her studies.

Testimonies from the World Weekend of Prayer

We have seen God move in such powerful and amazing ways over the weekend, here are some of the stories we heard.

During a World Weekend of Prayer event that was run by the network in **Nemby, Paraguay**, a lady asked for support for a case of sexual abuse of three girls. The judicial process had stalled and options to push the case forward were unclear. With the network coordination team and volunteers working together to respond, gaps in the case were identified and an effective intervention route was taken. The offender is currently in house detention until the prosecution finishes investigating and finalising the case.

In the event run by the network in **Harare, Zimbabwe**, one child, who had been suffering from substance abuse, was rescued from his suffering. A group of children were praying for one another in a group. Afterwards the children came out confessing new faith in God and vowed to stop substance abuse.



Buenos Aires, Argentina

The benefit of making this vow at a network event is that he can now be supported by the network through his transition.

In **Lusaka, Zambia**, one of the network platforms learned that girls in their community were doing drugs and getting involved in gangs, this event gave them a chance to pray with the girls and give them support and help.

The network in **Kampala, Uganda** had a number of testimonies of God's faithful healing, protection and provision during the event. One child shared about how unsafe they felt going to school alone and that every day as they walk to school, they say a prayer and give thanks for God's protection. Some testified God's provision for their school fees and other school requirements. These testimonies touched many others in their groups and taught them the power of prayer.

In **Rio de Janeiro, Brazil** the group did a World Weekend of Prayer event with street teenagers, many of whom are in precarious situations. They met three teenage mothers and, after praying for them, they asked if they can share their prayer requests with other countries. The girls opened up and said that during the prayer they had felt something moving in their hearts and didn't know what it was, but they called it hope. *"We want to know that we have friends outside this country, because here we have not found any friends who tell us that they love us and talking to God with friends gives us hope"*.

In **Colombia** many children of all different ages through the events showed willing hearts to be closer to Jesus through collective prayer. They were praying for healing, for several children who have been diagnosed with different rare diseases, and this saddened their hearts. During the time of prayer they received peace and hope for their healing.