

Statement delivered at 2nd thematic session of the High-level Political Forum held virtual on July 6, 2020.

Ensuring that No One is Left behind

I am speaking on behalf of World Vision and Together 2030 initiative, which is a civil society initiative aimed at supporting actionable policy and civil society participation for the achievement of the SDGs.

Vulnerable people do not have a voice, platform, and information for dialogue on the execution of the SDG at the grassroots. The COVID19 pandemic has further exacerbated the situation. In a research done by World Vision globally by speaking to vulnerable children and young people, we learned in many ways that children and young people are left behind:

- *Our government needs to listen more to children. No one asked us what it was like to be locked in houses for so long. (Girl, 14, Bosnia and Herzegovina)*
- *My parents forced my sister to marry an old man because we are 13 girls and boys at home, and my parents did not have the means to feed us all. (Girl, 16, Syria)*

There is a growing trend of impact in education, child marriage, forced labor, and other forms of negative social issues. SDGs will not be achieved if urgent actions are not taken now. Governments have the responsibility to keep the promises made to their citizens. Rights of people need to be respected protected and fulfilled, particularly for the most vulnerable, including children and young people.

Let us listen to people's voices. ***Who better to tell us if the services, enshrined rights are reaching and meeting critical needs than those who need them most – the vulnerable are the ones often left behind.***

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