



World Council of Churches

WCC Commitment announced at “Safe to Learn” Leaders Event, 15 July 2019, New York

At the “Safe to Learn” Leaders Event in New York in July, the WCC committed to promoting the Safe to Learn strategy. Building on the success of the WCC-UNICEF global partnership, the WCC will convene a global conference of church-run schools in 2020. It will raise awareness on toll free child helplines, and promote solutions to the climate crisis through the Safe to Learn actions.

The WCC commits to promoting the Safe to Learn strategy through its fellowship reaching half a billion Christians. Building on the success of the WCC-UNICEF global partnership, we will convene a global conference of church-run schools in 2020.

Church-run schools will be asked to display the toll-free numbers of child help-lines throughout their facilities. We will promote awareness on such helplines with support from the “Out of the Shadows” index fund - because it is essential that children can speak out in confidential settings when they are victims of violence, or suffer from anxiety.

One form of serious psychological violence which is increasing among children is eco-anxiety: the fear not to have a future because of the climate emergency. It affects children’s well-being in schools. Natural disasters caused by the climate emergency also forces an increasing number of schools to close and children to flee. The WCC commits to addressing climate justice throughout the Safe to Learn actions.

With support from the Keeling Curve Prize we will support church-run schools in engaging students and teachers around existing solutions through child rights education.

We commit to collaborating with many of you present here in doing what the children and teenagers in the climate marches are demanding from adults: changing the systems which cause the climate emergency. This includes changing our organisations’ way of operating, when these are not compatible with the Convention of the Rights of the Child: divesting from fossil fuels in our banks and pension funds and measuring our ecological footprints.

Schools need to give children the right to hope. We can help through the Safe to Learn strategy.