



## NEWS RELEASE

### 1.2 million Children exploited: leading humanitarian organizations respond

**MISSISSAUGA, Ont. (August 11, 2011)** — On Friday, August 12, World Vision will host a roundtable on human trafficking in Canada and abroad. Joined by representatives from seven leading organizations, the roundtable will hear from Dr. Maria Grazia Giammarinaro, Special Representative and Coordinator for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings at the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE). Dr. Giammarinaro is in Canada to raise awareness about the vulnerability of migrant workers which can lead to trafficking.

Canada, a member of the OSCE, is not immune to this crime - children as young as twelve have been trafficked into Canada. Globally, an estimated 1.2 million children are trafficked for labour and sexual exploitation each year. Poverty, family dysfunction, natural disasters and armed conflict make children vulnerable targets for trafficking.

"Canada needs a robust criminal justice response to prevent trafficking, especially amongst vulnerable workers" says Dr. Giammarinaro. "This needs to be a major element in a complex and concerted institutional and civil society response. These efforts should be rooted in the idea of social justice and social inclusion of migrant workers."

The roundtable is an opportunity for Canadian organizations, like World Vision, to share their best practices and to better combat human trafficking in Canada and abroad.

"This is a chance for organizations with their boots on the ground to build on the progress we've made and to pressure the government to improve its response." says Carleen McGuinty, Child Protection Policy Advisor at World Vision. "Girls and boys, women and men, continue to be victimized. We need the Government of Canada to step up, take a leadership role, and fulfill its promise of creating a national action plan to bring increased coordination in fighting this terrible crime."

World Vision combats human trafficking around the world. For more than a decade, the aid agency has seen firsthand how communities are being made more vulnerable and worked to change laws, bring education, and end human trafficking. World Vision is now calling on the Government of Canada to deliver their national strategy targeting all aspects of this crime."

#### **About Dr. Maria Grazia Giammarinaro:**

Dr. Maria Grazia Giammarinaro became OSCE Special Representative and Coordinator for Combating Human beings in January 2010 and previously held the role of judge at the Criminal Court of Rome. She served in the European Commission's Directorate-General for Justice, Freedom and Security in Brussels, where she was responsible for work to combat human trafficking and sexual exploitation of children, and for penal aspects of illegal immigration dealing with the fight against organized crime.

#### **Spokespeople available:**

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Maria Grazia Giammarinaro	Special Representative, Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE)

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