

WORLD VOICE

BRITISH COUNCIL

WORLD VOICE
2017-2020

EXPLORING THE SUCCESSES, CHALLENGES AND IMPACT OF THE FINAL THREE YEARS OF THE BRITISH COUNCIL'S WORLD VOICE PROGRAMME

REPORT BY CATHERINE BURGIS



A WORD FROM SOME PARTICIPANTS

"There is a lot of change. When I enter the classroom they are interested, happy"

Kebron Gebre Exebrier, Grade 6 Teacher, Mayday Primary School, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

"When I am singing, I feel perfect"

Samir, Child Training Participant, Skaramangos Refugee Accommodation, Greece

"World Voice is a great programme and I noticed that the teachers have enjoyed it very much and it fully fits with the needs of our learners and can make a positive change in mind-set"

Mr Mamoun, Training Manager, Ministry of education Khartoum, Sudan

cover photo: Student participant, Addis Ababa
in photo: Kidus, Master Trainer, Addis Ababa

in photo: World Voice Master Trainer Training, Sunsari, Nepal



INTRODUCTION

March 2020 marked the end of the British Council's World Voice Programme after seven years in operation in over twenty two countries. In partnership with governments, NGOs, UN agencies, arts organisations, head teachers, schools and some remarkable individuals, the programme, that trains teachers to use singing as a tool for learning, has reached over 1 million children worldwide. This report is intended to provide a narrative of the key achievements and challenges over the final three years of the programme (2017 – 2020) as the British Council hands over the intellectual property and development of World Voice to UK organisation The Sing Up Foundation.

"I love the training very, very much because there are many songs and it teaches us how to teach the songs. After this training I will teach the students these songs instead of just musical notation"

Tsion Abayneh, Grade 5 teacher, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia



"We learn to sing through practical experience and we learn to teach and train in the same way. Engaging in the activities themselves is the best way for pupils, teachers and trainers to learn singing workshop techniques and the rationale behind them. To become good trainers teachers need to experience in equal measure the process of being trained and the process of leading. They also need to observe a good leader working with a group of pupils."

Richard Frostick. World Voice Artistic Director

The original World Voice methodology was developed by Artistic Director Richard Frostick in 2013. The aim was to create a flexible programme of singing training that could be applied to a wide variety of contexts and trainees of all levels, and adapted to support a range of outcomes for children. These could range from using songs to support language learning, fostering a sense of community in refugee camps, using the content of songs to learn about all aspects of the curriculum, as a tool for positive behaviour management, or to build confidence and self-esteem. It was also essential that trainees and stakeholders saw experienced singing leaders working directly with children. The smiling faces of children engaged in a creative activity with proven educational and psychological benefits was often the most compelling tool for convincing a complex room of stakeholders (including ministers, government officials, UN representatives school inspectors, headteachers and potential funders) of the transformative nature of singing and creative approaches to teaching and learning.

Central to the methodology was the concept that trainers and children all participate in the same training, each taking on different levels of responsibility therefore gaining both the experience of teaching and being taught. Once the basic techniques of teaching a song have been mastered, then the application of singing as a tool for learning could begin. This might include using a singing game as a classroom management technique, creating a singing game to test understanding of a topic, or selecting material that has specific content relating to the area being taught. It is testament to the World Voice UK Leadership Team, the Country Co-ordinators, and to the innate power of singing that hearts and minds were changed sometimes only in a few hours by the introduction of what, in some contexts, was a radical new approach.



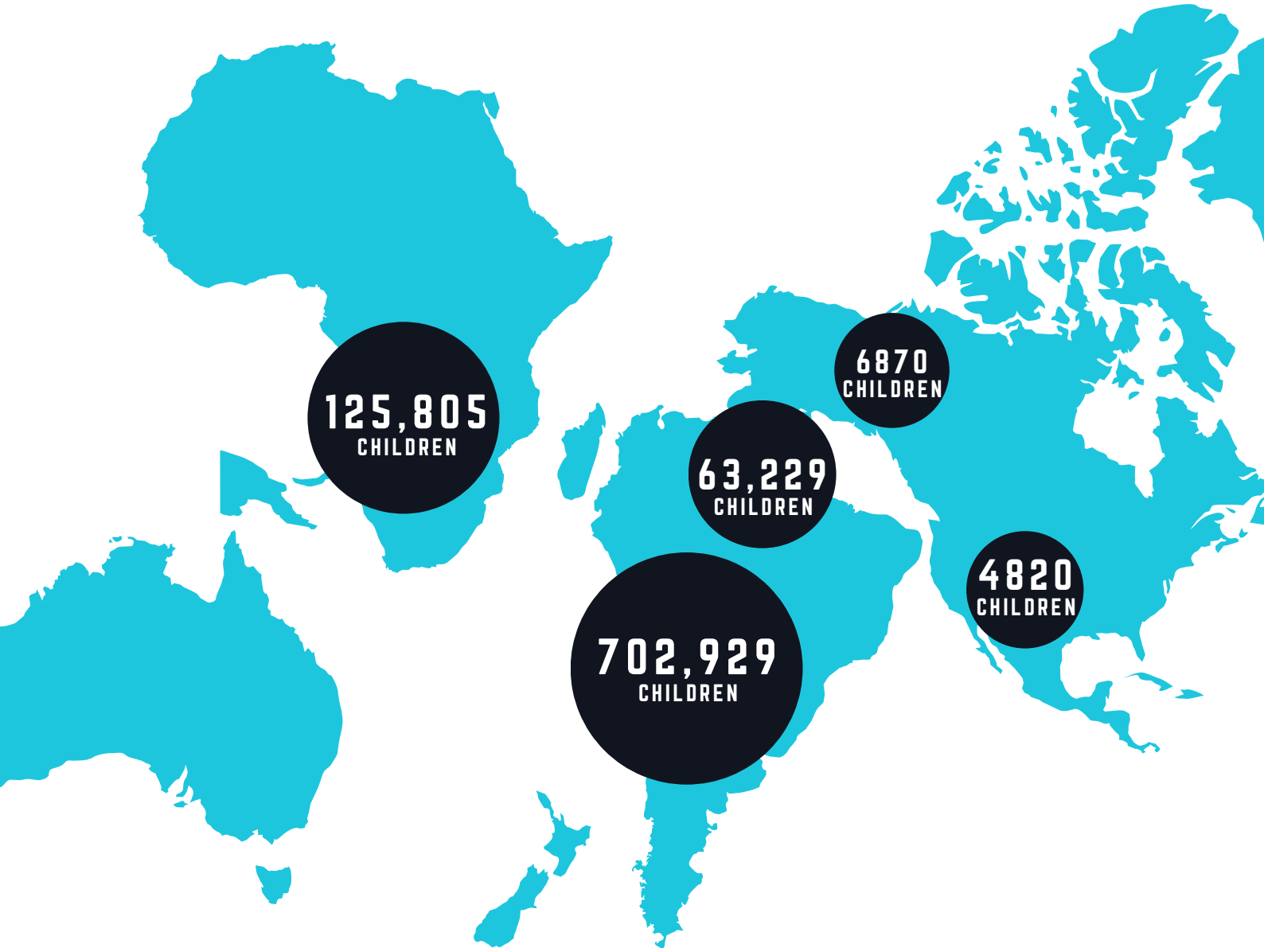
903,653

children reached between 2017-2020 of the World Voice Programme

4460

teachers trained to use singing in the classroom as a tool for learning between 2017-2020

Where data is not available, the British Council calculates the number of children indirectly reached by multiplying the number of teachers trained by the average class size of 40 students



A GLOBAL REVIEW

Between 2017 - 2020, World Voice training has had an impact on over 903,653 children across South America (Colombia, Chile), South Asia (Nepal), Middle East and North Africa (Lebanon, Palestine, Jordan), Sub-Saharan Africa (Ethiopia, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Senegal, Zimbabwe, Sudan, Morocco) Wider Europe (Greece - Refugee Programme,, Cyrpus, Russia). This is in addition to the 647,175 reached from the start of the programme in 2013.

Many of the World Voice UK Singing Leadership Team had encountered the challenges of introducing singing into schools through their work in the UK. The lack of confidence in their own abilities experienced by teachers, often coupled with time for creative subjects being squeezed in favour of the core curriculum had been addressed in parts by schemes such as the National Singing Programme, and innovative resources such as Sing Up. The key was to make singing not an extra activity, but embed it into the school day. Singing was, and often still is, seen by UK teachers as something done by choirs as a performance, not as a teaching tool to enrich their practice.

While the trainers bought with them the experience and tools to overcome individual reticence in teachers and schools, they too had to undergo a reciprocal process of learning and adapting their approaches. On the micro level, this involved overcoming challenges such as large class sizes, issues around gender, religion and musical performance, language barriers, resistance to informal learning styles and staffing changes. On the macro level, political unrest, changes of government and education policy and conflict all played their part in creating barriers to cascading the training. The work and innovation of the Country Co-ordinators cannot be underestimated in overcoming these barriers and building the partnerships and networks that were vital for reaching as many teachers and children as possible. The programme was also not simply an exercise in sharing techniques from one educational system - the huge benefit of working across multiple countries was the learning that could be brought back to the UK. Through the World Voice Songbook, and the UK Residencies, songs and teaching ideas were shared in a cultural exchange between teachers and children. Indeed, this communication and exchange between teacher and pupil, trainer and teacher, Lead Trainer and trainee trainers is at the very heart of what makes the World Voice programme so unique. It was and is a training programme shaped by the participants, their willingness to try something new, to challenge ingrained attitudes, to step out of their comfort zones and take the programme forward in innovative and creative ways for the benefit of their pupils.



WORLD VOICE

2017-18

The **World Voice North of England Residency** in October 2017 was just one of the highlights of a year that saw World Voice training take place in 13 countries and **introduced Joyce Didonato as World Voice Ambassador.**

PROGRAMME REACH
MASTER TRAINERS: 93
TEACHERS: 1175
DIRECT CHILDREN: 18275
INDIRECT CHILDREN: 71876
TOTAL CHILDREN: 90151

MAY 2017

Sierra Leone Training (Sharon Durant)

JULY 2017

Sudan Cascade Training (River Nile State)

SEPTEMBER 2017

Greece Training (Skaramangas Camp, Jane Wheeler); Jordan Training (with Finn Church, Azraq and Za'atari Camps and UNWRA Master Trainers, Jane Wheeler); Sudan Cascade Training (Gazira State); World Voice Nepal

NOVEMBER 2017

World Voice Ambassador Joyce DiDonata Launch (London, UK); Ethiopia Cascade Training for Government Schools and Choir Performance at 75th Anniversary Celebrations Senegal Children's Choir performance at Language Development Conference,

JANUARY 2018

Sierra Leone Cascade Training (Freetown); Senegal Cascade Training

MARCH 2018

Colombia Cascade Training across 4 regions lead by Batuta Master Trainers; Greece Refugee Concert Planning Visit (Jane Wheeler); Senegal Final Performance

APRIL 2017

Colombia Cascade Training across 5 regions lead by Batuta Master Trainers; World Voice songs performed at Princess Ann's visit to Freetown, Sierra Leone; Children's choir performance, Senegal Queen's Birthday Party Performane

JUNE 2017

Rwanda Training (Elin Llywd)

AUGUST 2017

Palestine Training (Richard Frostick) Nepal Cascade Training (4 districts)

OCTOBER 2017

North of England Residency, Hull, UK; Rwanda Training (Elin Llwyd), Sierra Leone School Heads Introduction Event; Lebanon Training (Lin Marsh)

DECEMBER 2017

Sudan Master Trainer Graduation Ceremony (Red Sea State) Ethiopia Cascade Training for Private Schools

FEBRUARY 2018

Ethiopia Cascade Training Introduction to Refugee Camps and Children's Choir Performance at DFID International Conference

2017-18

"Music and singing speaks to children. It's one language, universally, that they share. World Voice can work with children who are hard to reach who have struggled in their lives"

Jane Wheeler, World Voice Trainer

2017-18 was a year of new beginnings for World Voice, and one that saw British Council country teams and World Voice Master Trainers begin to design and cascade their own training programmes with confidence and ingenuity. The year began with teachers from the Batuta Institute (the programme's delivery partner in Colombia) rolling out cascade training across five regions and two royal celebrations featuring World Voice children's choirs in Sierra Leone and Senegal. The twinning of Freetown, Sierra Leone and Hull, UK (the 2017-18 UK City of Culture) would be an important feature for World Voice. The North of England Residency in October 2017 brought seventeen World Voice-trained teachers from four continents to train alongside Music Hub Vocal Leaders from seven Northern Music Hubs and teachers from Hull travelled to Freetown share best practice in classroom and whole-school singing.

In Jordan, Greece and Ethiopia, training programmes launched in refugee camps, with training focusing on language learning and well-being for displaced children. Preparations for a children's concert at the Athens Conservatory featuring 50 children from the Skaramangas Refugee Camp began in earnest towards the end of the year.

In November 2017, world-renowned opera singer Joyce DiDonato was announced as the first World Voice Ambassador at a launch event in the UK. Ethiopian Master Trainer and programme advocate Zeny Zerfu joined Artistic Director Richard Frostick and Director of Music Cathy Graham to welcome Ms DiDonato. Together they announced to bring the number of children reached since the start of the programme to one million.

The programme also said goodbye to consultant Bridget Whyte who had been part of the team that originally conceived World Voice back in 2013, and an instrumental part of developing and adapting the World Voice model to suit new contexts and challenges.

While cascading work and training visits continued in Palestine, Nepal, Jordan, Sudan, Lebanon, Sierra Leone, Colombia and Ethiopia, Rwanda had its first visit training a cohort of primary school teachers. In March 2018, Senegal, one of the two countries in which World Voice was first piloted, held a final graduation event for the programme's first trainee teachers and trainers. The year ended with a meeting of Co-ordinators hosted, by the Ethiopia team, to share best practice and plan for the year ahead.



in photo: Sierra Leonian musician Cecil Jones (who now lives and works in Hull, UK) shares music with primary school children at the World Voice North of England Residency

2018-19

2018-19 was a transition year for World Voice as the British Council announced it would be moving towards a new model for programme planning. During this year the team was able to support further countries.

Given the two-year timeline, the team were able to support further cascade training across all active countries while launching three new country programmes. The first was a series of workshops delivered directly to children by World Voice Master Trainer Maria Kramvi who had attended World Voice training the previous year in Greece. Funded by the Bank of Cyprus, Maria developed a series of World Voice workshops at the Cultural Centre. The second was a partnership with the British Council Russia team who, as part of the Russia Year of Music, wanted to introduce World Voice techniques to secondary teachers in partnership with Letovo School, Moscow. For the first time, secondary school studens were trained alongside their teachers in all aspects of singing and singing leadership. The British Council also partnered with the Moroccan Ministry of Education to develop a programme delivering World Voice training to English, Arabic, French and music teachers to support the teaching of multiple languages in secondary schools.

New countries were welcomed to the programme in 2018-19 including a brand new focus on secondary students in **Morocco** and **Russia**, direct workshops with children in **Cyprus**. The **World Voice Fundraising Gala** hosted by Ambassador Joyce DiDonato also took place in November.

WORLD VOICE
2018-19

PROGRAMME REACH
MASTER TRAINERS: 77
TEACHERS: 1812
DIRECT CHILDREN: 101335
INDIRECT CHILDREN :347010
TOTAL CHILDREN: 448345

MAY 2018

Greece Refugee Concert, Athens Conservatory (UNICEF, Jane Wheeler); Palestine Casade Training Hebron/Bethlehem, Nablus and Ramallah); Rwanda Cascade Training

JULY 2018

Ethiopia Cascade Training

SEPTEMBER 2018

Ethiopia Cascade Training; World Voice Handbook country consultaion begins

NOVEMBER 2018

UK Team Scoping visit to Morocco; Fundraising Gala (London, UK)

JANUARY 2019

Sudan Teachers Graduation Ceremony

MARCH 2019

Colombia Top-Up Training (Sharon Durant) Nepal Children's Choir Performance, Echoes in The Valley Music Festival's Music and Education Symposium; Russia Training (Sharon Durant) World Voice Co-ordinator's Meeting and Legacy Year Launch (London, UK)

APRIL 2018

UK Team Scoping visit to Cyprus and evaluation meeting with UNWRA Master Trainers in Jordan

JUNE 2018

Rwanda Cascade Training

AUGUST 2018

Ethiopia Top Up Training (Richard Frostick) Nepal Evaluation begins

OCTOBER 2018

Sierra Leone Cascade Training; Ethiopia Cascade Training

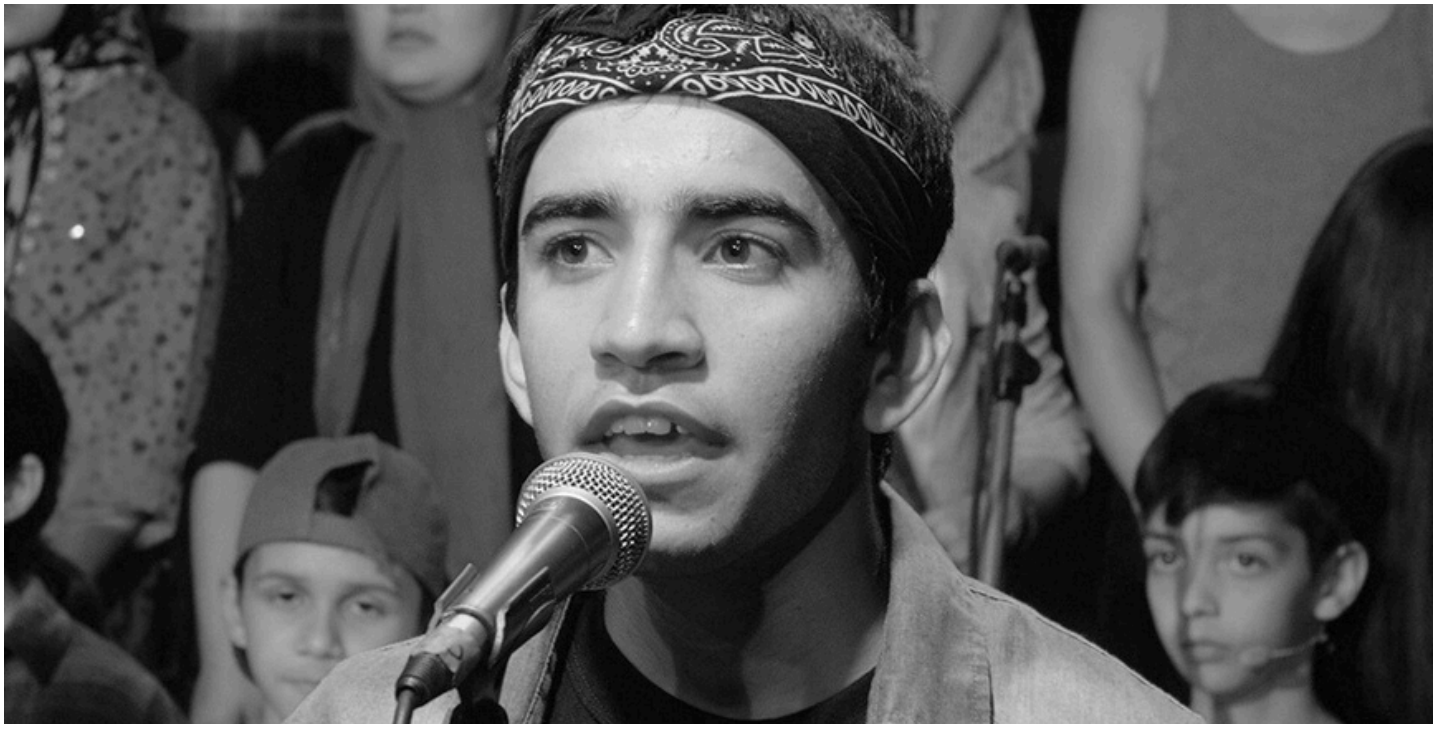
DECEMBER 2018

Rwanda Cascade Training; UK Team Scoping visit to Russia as part of Russia Year of Music; Cyprus Training (Lin Marsh)

FEBRUARY 2019

Rwanda Cascade Training; Cyprus Children's Workshop (Bank of Cyprus Cultural Centre); Zimbabwe Top-Up Training (Elin Llwyd), first training visit to Morocco (Richard Frostick)

in photo: Student participant, Greece World Voice Refugee Concert, May 2018



“Upon discussion with students and teachers, I would like to express on their behalf, their uniquely positive feelings for the World Voice experience. Students enjoyed it to the fullest and cooperated harmoniously regardless of their gender or national background. Teachers valued the methodology and psychosocial effect for children. Looking forward for the continuation of World Voice in the future”

N.R, Field Education Officer at Elix, NGO, Athens

The year began with the World Voice Children's Concert in Greece featuring fifty displaced children from the Skaramangas Refugee Camp performing World Voice songs from around the world to an audience of over five hundred at the Athens Conservatory. The event was a unique moment in the history of World Voice where children who had suffered the trauma of fleeing war-torn homes could come together and sing in five different languages.

In November, World Voice Ambassador Joyce DiDonata generously hosted a fundraising gala to raise money to help the programme reach its 'One Million Children' target. The event featured a stunning performance by the opera singer as well as an auction and was a chance to share in more detail some of the personal stories of some extraordinary children who have experienced what the programme has to offer.

AMEEN

Ameen (6) entered the Helen Keller School, for the visually impaired, with no background or the slightest training as to how to go by his daily activities due to being totally blind. It was evident from the start that Ameen was a sensitive and shy little boy. Ameen very much kept to himself and did not engage with the other children. To overcome these matters, the school worked on improving his mobility skills by teaching him to make use of his senses. Ameen learned to focus his sense of hearing through music and the sense of touch through movement. A few years on, World Voice's Artistic Director, Richard Frostick, visited the Helen Keller School through the British Council to deliver the programme. It was only through the World Voice sessions and the use of music and movement that a new, inspired Ameen appeared. The three days of World Voice workshops gave Ameen the ability to distinguish each sound on its own.

By the end of the three days, Ameen had learned all the lyrics, beats, and moves to the World Voice songs; an enormous achievement in itself. This little boy surprised the entire school staff as well as his peers with his eagerness to participate in group and solo songs. For the first time in years, Ameen was truly engaged and there was clear improvement in his social and mobility skills. World Voice gave him the opportunity to understand himself which in turn instilled self-confidence. As a result Ameen has become active and learned to collaborate with and accept the other children through this unique experience. Ameen subsequently sang in a World Voice concert in Palestine, with sixteen other students from the Helen Keller School. Excited, he sang his heart out. His voice filled the hall as people cheered.

Manal Radi (Senior Teacher at the Helen Keller School)





Additions to the World Voice Songbook (an online treasury of authentic songs and pronunciation guides collected by the UK World Voice Trainers from each country they visited) continued to be made including two songs from renowned Palestinian composer Suhail Khoury, and a version of Kenyan pop sensation Sauti Sol's song 'Soma Kijana' which advocates for young people to read and study. But with Master Trainers now planning and leading their own training, there was a growing need for a comprehensive teaching resource that could be used by teachers or any subject and musical experience. Consultation began with country teams, Master Trainers and education teams across the British Council as to how the World Voice methodology could be captured in a single, adaptable resource.

"If I were to have designed a dream project, it would be this"

Joyce DiDonato, World Voice Ambassador

The year came to a close in March 2019 when the entire team of Country Co-ordinators, World Voice UK Vocal Leaders and Programme Management came together in London, UK to plan and launch what would be the final Legacy Year.

WORLD VOICE

2019-20

In the final **Legacy Year**, all teams focused on how best to support teachers and trainers to cascade their training and finding new partners who could take over development. Despite the challenges of Covid-19, which sadly shortened the third **World Voice UK Residency** in partnership with **West Midlands Music Hubs**, every country was supported through training, and teaching resources to embed a lasting legacy for World Voice.

PROGRAMME REACH
MASTER TRAINERS: 81
TEACHERS: 1226
DIRECT CHILDREN: 18300
INDIRECT CHILDREN: 223130
TOTAL CHILDREN: 241430

APRIL 2019

First draft of the World Voice Teachers Handbook circulated to Country Co-ordinators

MAY 2019

Colombia Cascade Training; Rwanda Cascade Training

JUNE 2019

Morocco Training (Sharon Durant); Filming begins for World Voice Teachers Handbook

JULY 2019

Ethiopia Cascade Training; The Sing Up Foundation identified as Legacy Partner

AUGUST 2019

World Voice: A Teacher's Guide to Singing in the Classroom published (World Voice Teacher's Handbook); Rwanda Cascade Training

SEPTEMBER 2019

Zimbabwe World Voice Handbook (Zimbabwe Edition) validated by Curriculum Development Unit (Ministry of Education); Colombia Legacy Training (Jane Wheeler); Sudan Cascade Training

OCTOBER 2019

Sudan Cascade Training; Russia Training (Richard Frostick); Sierra Leone Legacy Training (Jane Wheeler)

NOVEMBER 2019

Ethiopia Cascade Training and formation of World Voice Association; Cyprus Children's Workshops

DECEMBER 2019

Ethiopia Legacy Training (Lin Marsh)

JANUARY 2020

Sound Connections appointed as external evaluators ;

FEBRUARY 2020

Russia World Voice Handbook (Russian Edition) published; Lebanon Legacy Training (Lin Marsh); Russia Legacy Training (Richard Frostick); Nepal Legacy Training (Jane Wheeler); Palestine Legacy Training (Richard Frostick)

MARCH 2020

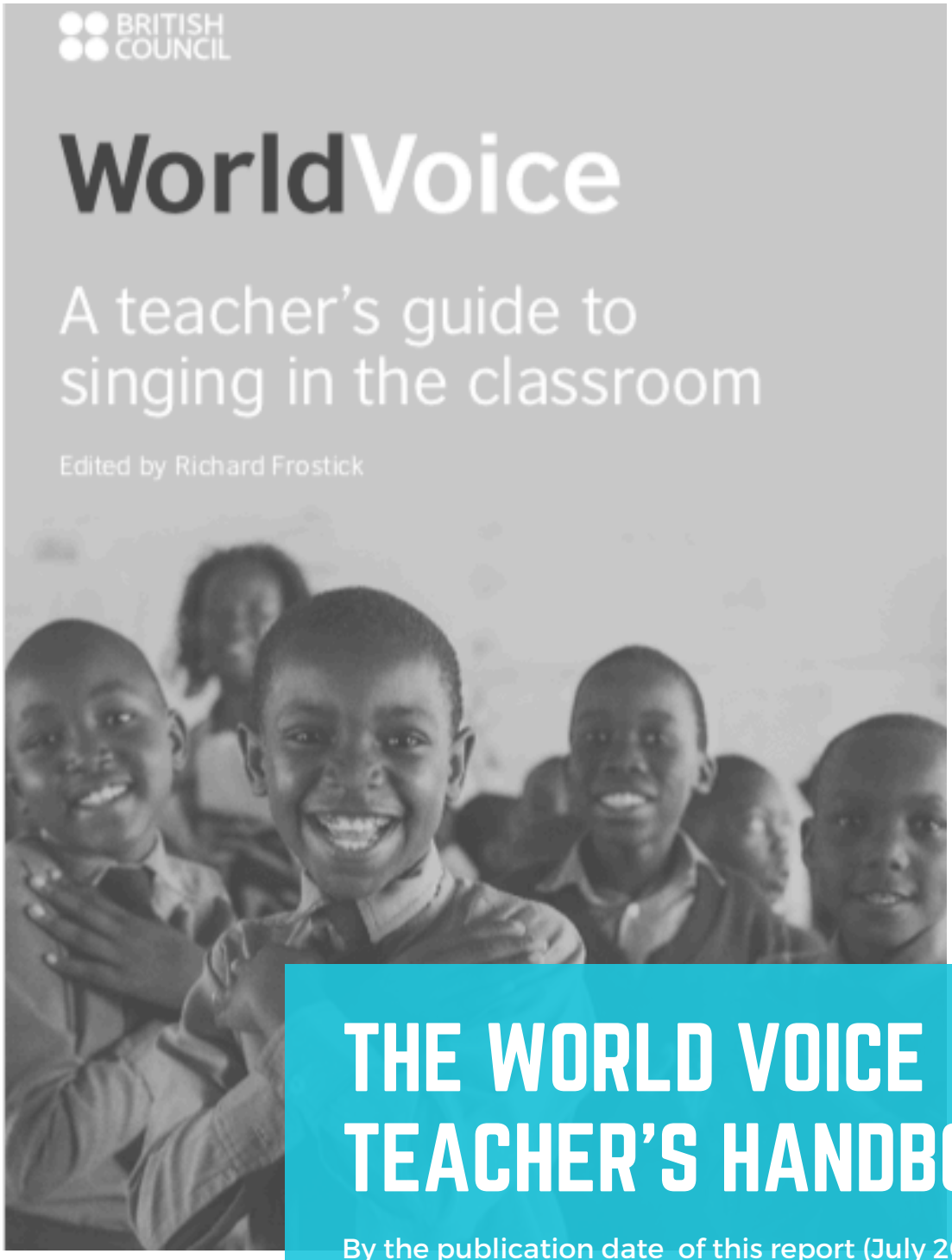
Palestine World Voice Teacher's Handbook (Arabic Edition) published; World Voice West Midlands UK Residenct

2019-20

"After this seminar I feel much more confident in myself. Singing together with your friends and teachers and learning things with pleasure at the same time – that's what really makes you happy"

Student Participant, Letovo School, Moscow, Russia

2019-20 The Final year of the World Voice programme was one of celebration and legacy-building, but also one that bought unprecedented global challenges. Early in the year, foundations were laid to ensure future support for teachers and Master Trainers. Filming began on the video guides to accompany the World Voice Teacher's Handbook, an external evaluation of the programme was planned, and discussions began about a final celebratory UK Residency in partnership with the West Midlands Music Hubs. While Cascade Training continued in all active countries, the World Voice UK Vocal Leadership Team worked with country teams to plan a bespoke set of trainings and resources that would build on all the work done in previous years.



THE WORLD VOICE TEACHER'S HANDBOOK

By the publication date of this report (July 2020), 'World Voice: A Teacher's Guide to Singing in the Classroom' has been shared with teachers in 23 countries, translated into Arabic and Russian ,and adapted in partnership with Education Ministries in Zimbabwe and Rwanda, with other adaptations currently being developed.

Having identified UK-based T**he Sing Up Foundation** as the best-placed organisation to take World Voice forward after March 2020, both teams worked closely together to develop plans for a digital platform to host all existing World Voice resources which will be available later in the year.

While **Sound Connections** were appointed to undertake an in-depth evaluation of the impact of World Voice on teachers, children and policy in five key countries (Colombia, Nepal, Greece Refugee Project, Ethiopia and Palestine), the English edition of the World Voice Songbook was published along with comprehensive video guides. This was well-received by country teams who, in many cases, began work on developing translated and adapted editions for their own contexts. Challenges abounded: political unrest in Ethiopia and Sudan put cascade training on hold for some months; education policy change in Jordan that prohibited extra-curricular activities meant that no further training could take place, and difficulties filling staff vacancies delayed Morocco training. Despite this, by February 2020, Legacy Training had taken place in nearly all active countries. A group of Master Trainers were due to visit the UK once more for a final World Voice UK Residency in partnership with the West Midlands Music Hubs. An ambitious programme of school visits across fourteen regions, bringing together 3000 children for a final performance of World Voice music alongside partners Ex Cathedra began with three days of workshops in mid-March. Similar celebrations were planned in Palestine and Lebanon where children's choirs would perform songs from the World Voice Songbook. Other countries were rolling out their own legacy plans, including the Ethiopia country team who, working with stakeholders and Master Trainers, set up a charitable association to take on the delivery of World Voice.

And then, in mid-March, the world as we knew it changed. The outbreak of Covid-19 and worldwide lockdown dawned just as the final weeks of World Voice training, celebrations and Residency were to take place. While it was not how all those involved in World Voice would have chosen for the programme to end, the dedication, hard work, and knowledge of those who have trained in World Voice techniques and shared their knowledge with others lives on in a powerful network of those committed to improving outcomes for children through creativity and song.

in photo: World Voice UK Vocal Leader Lin Marsh works with children participating in World Voice training in Lebanon



A FINAL SNAPSHOT 2013-2020

23

COUNTRIES
Colombia, Brazil, Argentina, Chile, United Kingdom, Greece, Cyprus, Russia, Nepal, Hong Kong, India, Bangladesh, Jordan, Lebanon, Palestine, Kenya, Senegal, Zimbabwe, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Sudan, Ethiopia and Morocco

12023

TEACHERS
have been trained worldwide to use singing as a tool for learning and to promote musicality, creativity, social and emotional well-being, resilience and language skills.

1.55M

CHILDREN
have been reached by World Voice trainers, teachers and partners



"To all the World Voice practitioners around the world, thank you for sharing our vision and for joining us on this wonderful journey. You ...have been a constant source of inspiration to us"

Richard Frostick, World Voice Artistic Director, March 2020
(From the World Voice Teacher's Handbook Acknowledgements)

The British Council would like to thank the World Voice UK Leadership Team (Richard Frostick, Lin Marsh, Jane Wheeler, Ian Young, Sharon Durant and Elin Llwyd for their invaluable contribution to developing and delivering the World Voice programme.

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