



Call for Project Partnerships

Communication Rights in a Digital Age Program

Call Launched: May 24th, 2021

Proposals Deadline: June 18th, 2021



Photo: Courtesy of ACT Alliance

[WACC](#) is seeking civil society partners in [DAC-list](#) countries in Africa, the Pacific, and the Middle East interested in implementing year-long projects that:

- a. Support digital media literacy among marginalized and excluded communities, especially in order to counter the phenomenon of online disinformation and misinformation; and/or
- b. Support community-initiated efforts to develop and/or manage telecommunications infrastructure, exemplified by community-managed telecommunication company Telecomunicaciones Indigenas Comunitarias (TIC) in Oaxaca, Mexicoⁱⁱ, in order to increase access to mobile telephony and internet services;

This is a highly competitive call. WACC will support only up to **four (4) projects** under this call. The deadline to apply is June 18th, 2021. You will hear back from WACC by the end of June 2021. **WACC would like all selected projects to start in July 2021.**

Projects supported under this theme will align with SDG 9- Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure; SDG 16- Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions; and SDG 17- Partnership for the Goals. Elements related to media literacy align with SDG 4- Quality Education.

If selected, WACC will each contribute up to EUR 15,000 to your organization's project budget, while your organization will be expected to make a contribution of a minimum of EUR 5,000 **in cash**, for a total budget of approximately EUR 20,000.

In addition to the grant for a year-long project, partners may be eligible to receive the following forms of support as part of their partnership with WACC:

- Opportunity to attend a knowledge sharing event organized by WACC on the theme of sustainable development and media/communication (pending travel restrictions);
- Opportunity to receive a 600 EUR grant to raise public awareness about the organization's work;
- Possibility of receiving an additional grant to purchase broadcasting, media production and/or energy generation equipment (i.e. solar panels) to support the organization's work (WACC would cover 75% of the total costs while the selected organization would contribute 25% in cash);
- Opportunity to work with other WACC partners on a joint initiative to identify and present best practices by attending a national, regional or international conference (pending travel restrictions); and/or
- Opportunity to access resources materials on communication rights and on the link between communication and sustainable development via WACC's virtual forum for its project partners.

Background

Within the United Nation's 2030 Agenda, SDGs 9 and 17 recognize the need to enable people everywhere to benefit from access to the internet and to mobile telephony. The inclusion of these issues in the Sustainable Development agenda represents undeniable progress from a communication and information perspective as increased access to relevant technology and platforms can help equip people with the tools to participate in the information society, have their voices heard, and contribute to the production and dissemination of knowledge. This is especially relevant as it is estimated that about 3 billion people today lack access to the internet and about 2 billion do not have access to a mobile phoneⁱⁱⁱ.

WACC applauds the focus on access to ICTs and Internet services in Agenda 2030. Nevertheless, WACC and its partners believe that at a time when digital communication is becoming increasingly prevalent and policymakers in many countries are developing the digital infrastructure and governance models of the future, it is critical to move beyond the mere celebration of access in order to address more structural issues. Questions about ownership, regulation, privacy, and illegal surveillance of civil society actors must be central elements of the conversation about ICTs in development. Some of these issues have been raised by the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Promotion and Protection of the Right to Freedom of Opinion and Expression, Mr. David Kaye, in his office's 2015, 2016, and 2017 reports^{iv}.

WACC acknowledges that greater access to the internet and digital platforms alone will not be sufficient to contribute to sustainable development. It is essential to promote the use of these new tools in such a way that those communities most often excluded achieve greater participation and in a way that helps create the political will to implement public policies that contribute to greater equity and inclusion. This use of digital platforms must occur within a framework of rights that help generate genuine opportunities for free and informed

participation to promote true sustainable development. This is particularly important given the growing trend of shrinking space for civil society, which often manifests itself online as well in the form of online surveillance and internet shutdowns.

What does WACC want to achieve?

WACC is committed to strengthening public voices and participation of poor, marginalised, excluded and dispossessed people and communities, in digital communication.

WACC is committed to gender equality and expects projects to demonstrate a gender perspective.

WACC encourages project applicants to consider the needs of young people and people with disabilities.

Who Can Apply?

Civil society organizations in [DAC-list](#) countries in Africa, the Pacific, and the Middle East are eligible to seek support. WACC will check the standing and credibility of applicants. WACC will consider only one application at a time from each organization. WACC does not accept project applications from individuals or government institutions.

What does WACC NOT support?

- Projects whose main purpose is income generation.
- Emergency appeals to replace destroyed equipment
- Programmes that are purely denominational in content and outreach
- Purchases and/or maintenance of land, buildings, offices, and vehicles, and recurring expenditures such as rent and utilities
- Institutional operational costs such as regular staff salaries, endowment fund or revolving fund
- Equipment for purely office administration purposes
- Ongoing projects that started before a request for support
- Ongoing or new periodical publications
- Cost of air-time
- Per diems (although direct cost of food and lodging for project activities is supported)
- Debt repayment, contingency and depreciation
- Proposals from individuals not representing an eligible organisation
- Proposals from government entities
- Applications from previous project holders with a poor reporting track record
- Applications previously declined by WACC
- A total budget of more than 30,000 Euros

How to apply

1. Complete the Project Application Form (see WACC website to download the form).
2. Complete the Budget Template (please use only “Local Currency” tab; do not enter anything into the USD or EUR tabs). If you have trouble with the budget format, please use your own. (see WACC website to download the form).
3. Provide Two letters of reference from two individuals representing verifiable national or international organizations (other than your own) who are familiar with your organization. The letters are expected to comment on your organization’s past work and suitability to undertake the proposed project.

4. Send your application to projects@waccglobal.org. Please use the subject line: Communication Rights in a Digital Era Program. **PLEASE DO NOT SEND APPLICATION TO ANY OTHER WACC ADDRESS.**

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Should your organization be selected, you will be asked to provide the following:

- a. Proof of legal registration as civil society non-profit organization in your country; and
- b. Your organization's latest financial statements, ideally audited.

About WACC

[WACC](#) is an international organization that promotes communication as a basic human right, essential to people's dignity and community. WACC works with all those denied the right to communicate because of status, identity, or gender. It advocates full access to information and communication, and promotes open and diverse media. WACC strengthens networks of communicators to advance peace, understanding and justice. To learn more about WACC's commitment to communication rights, please view WACC's [No-Nonsense Guide to Communication Rights](#).

ⁱ <https://www.oecd.org/dac/financing-sustainable-development/development-finance-standards/DAC-List-ODA-Recipients-for-reporting-2021-flows.pdf>

ⁱⁱ Ó Siochrú, Seán. 2017. *Spectrum Innovation for Small-Scale Community-Owned Mobile Telephony: Strategic Considerations*. World Association for Christian Communication (WACC) and World Association of Community Radio Broadcasters (AMARC).

ⁱⁱⁱ 2018 Global Digital Report. 2018 <https://wearesocial.com/us/blog/2018/01/global-digital-report-2018>

^{iv} United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights. Freedom of Opinion and Expression- Annual Reports <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/FreedomOpinion/Pages/Annual.aspx>