



Call for Project Partnerships

Climate Change and Communication Rights Program

Call Launched: April 20th, 2024

Proposals Deadline May 31st, 2024



Indigenous Environmental Reporters in Putumayo Department, Colombia. Photo Credit: Grupo Comunicarte/WACC

[WACC](#) is seeking civil society partners in DAC-listⁱ countries in Africa, Latin America (specifically in Bolivia and Venezuela), and the Middle East interested in implementing year-long projects that:

- a. Enable and build the capacity of communities at the grassroots level to use traditional ecological knowledge (TEK) to enhance local climate change mitigation strategies; and/or
- b. Support the development of networks of environmental citizen journalists and/or grassroots reporters engaged in local “constructive”ⁱⁱ journalism, particularly those working to raise broader awareness about environmental issues, local and traditional knowledge, and climate adaptation/mitigation.

This is a highly competitive call. WACC will support only up to **three (4) projects** under this call: one (1) in Africa, one (1) in the Middle East, and two in Latin America (one (1) in Bolivia and one (1) in Venezuela) The deadline to apply is May 31st, 2024. Decisions will be announced by end of June 2024. **Selected projects should be prepared to start in July 2024.**

If selected, WACC will contribute up to EUR 10,000 to the project's budget. Selected organizations are free to look for additional funding to complement WACC's contribution of they wish to, though this is not mandatory.

Projects supported under this theme will align with SDG 16- Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions, SDG 13- Climate Action, and the objectives of the Paris Agreements.

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;
- 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 resource materials on communication rights and on the link between communication and sustainable development via WACC's virtual forum for its project partners.

Background

A 2018 report by the UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC)ⁱⁱⁱ on the impacts of global warming warned about the very real risk of environmental catastrophe in the medium term unless societies around the world radically change their ways of life. The report warns of risks such as more frequent droughts, sea level rises, and loss of biodiversity, among others.

As climate change exacerbates already existing inequalities within and among communities, it has a disproportionate effect on marginalized and isolated communities, particularly for those whose lifestyle is directly linked to nature and those who depend on local or traditional knowledge for subsistence and survival.

- Climate change is poised to make matters worse for subsistence farmers through a shift in climate and agricultural zones, changes in production patterns due to higher temperatures, and more extreme and unpredictable precipitation patterns all of which threaten crops and food security.
- Poverty and inequality will only get worse with climate change because disadvantaged groups do not have the capacity to adapt or the resources to cope with effects such as extreme flooding or droughts that may displace them or change their way of life
- Developing countries already struggle with lack of infrastructure and access to technological and financial resources, among a number of other concerns that will hinder their ability to adapt.
- It is widely recognised that women are disproportionately affected by climate change. In many developing countries, a gendered division of labour, restricted access to land, capital, technologies, and other financial resources, as well as limited access to

political decision-making spheres, have hindered women from playing a full role in tackling climate change and other environmental challenges.

- As climate change intensifies, many communities will experience ‘loss and damage’ as some climate impacts will be too severe for communities to adapt to. Many will be forced to move as they become exposed to the effects of climate change, rising sea levels, extreme drought or even extreme rainfall – all which are anticipated to become the norm. Small island developing states (SIDS) are particularly vulnerable to climate-induced displacement and are at the forefront of the effects of climate change.

WACC believes that there is strong link between communication and environmental issues, including climate change. Our collective response as a human family to the many threats posed by climate change partly depends on the extent to which climate-related issues receive public attention, particularly in terms of media content, which can have a knock-on effect in terms of public mobilization and policy change. Furthermore, given that the effects of climate change have a disproportionate impact on people and communities in vulnerable situations, WACC believes that enabling those communities to tell their stories, organize for change, and advance their own solutions to the climate crisis is critical.

Why Traditional Ecological Knowledge?

According to World Intellectual Property Organisation, traditional knowledge is “a living body of knowledge that is developed, sustained and passed on from generation to generation within a community, often forming part of its cultural or spiritual identity.”^{iv} As such, indigenous knowledge is tied to a single culture or society gained through many years of community experience through trial and error.

It is widely accepted that traditional knowledge represents an alternative way of thinking, which has evolved over time to help traditional – often indigenous – communities to protect their lives and livelihoods. Today, this applies especially to the effects of climate change as integrating traditional and scientific knowledge can increase the adaptive capacity of communities. Many indigenous territories are located in areas where the impacts of global warming are anticipated to be both early and severe. Over centuries, indigenous women and men have learnt the art of adapting to change, and this knowledge and skill can help present generations with the techniques necessary to adapt and survive.

In recent years the 5th Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and the Paris Agreement have also recognised the importance of traditional and indigenous knowledge in the context of building resilience to climate change.

For information and knowledge about climate change to be understood, trusted and absorbed by communities, local activists need to communicate using appropriate language, metaphor, and analogy; using narrative storytelling; making stories vivid through visual imagery and experiential scenarios; offering a balance of scientific information delivered through trusted messengers in community settings. There is also a need to focus on adaptive coping, which involves acceptance of change and loss rather than resistance.

Such an approach is in line with two key aspects of SDG Goal 13: strengthening resilience and adaptive capacity to climate-related hazards and natural disasters; and improving education, awareness-raising, and human and institutional capacity on climate change mitigation, adaptation, impact reduction and early warning. It also responds to the need to engage all people everywhere in the hope of limiting and helping to prevent global climate changes.

Expected outcomes:

- Strengthened capacities of grassroots organizations to document and share good practices related to traditional ecological knowledge;
- Improved networks of communication practitioners involved in climate mitigation, traditional ecological knowledge, and natural resource management-related activities; and/or
- Greater awareness on the role of traditional ecological knowledge and communication in enhancing natural resource management at the local, regional, and global level.

Why Networks of Environmental Citizen Journalists?

WACC believes in the need of promoting and strengthening a culture of people-led environmental protection in countries and regions most affected by climate change. To that end, WACC is interested in supporting the establishment of networks of grassroots citizen journalists interested in promoting community-centred, ecologically-balanced and culturally-sensitive approaches to development both in their local communities and beyond.

Citizen journalism offers a way of communicating that is alternative to mainstream media and that is more affordable and accessible. In particular, citizen journalism has the potential to help empower marginalized and excluded peoples and communities to advance their causes and to change their lives. Citizen journalism can also provide a way for news media to add much needed voices to an increasingly fragmented and polarized media landscape by promoting “engaged dialogue” – a willingness to listen to what other people are saying and how they see the world. In this respect, citizen journalism can challenge the conventional role of mainstream news media and give a public voice to communities seeking to influence decisions or change policies that directly affect their welfare.

Some of the ways in which networks of citizen journalists can contribute to the development of a culture of environmental protection in their communities are:

- Producing locally relevant media content about environmental issues,
- Raising awareness about risks, opportunities, and challenges related to environmental issues,
- Disseminating key knowledge and information among new audiences,
- Creating dialogue spaces about environmental issues,
- Promoting a people-centred approach to resilience and preparedness
- Building bridges between and among communities affected by environmental degradation in order to encourage cooperation, and
- Helping communities to organize in order to respond to the challenges posed by environmental degradation.

Initiatives seeking to establish or strengthen networks of citizen journalists using either analogue media (i.e. community radio^v) or digital channels, or a combination of the two, are welcome to apply.

What does WACC want to achieve?

WACC is committed to strengthening public voices and participation of poor, marginalised, excluded and dispossessed people and communities, including people and communities affected by the climate crisis, in communication. To learn more about WACC’s commitment to Communication Rights, please click [here](#).

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 legally registered in DAC-list countries in Africa, Latin America, 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. WACC supports organizations of all faiths and none.

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 (2) 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: Climate Change and Communication Rights Program. **PLEASE DO NOT SEND THE CONCEPT NOTE TO ANY OTHER WACC ADDRESS.**

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-of-ODA-Recipients-for-reporting-2024-25-flows.pdf>

ⁱⁱ <https://constructiveinstitute.org/why/>

ⁱⁱⁱ <https://www.ipcc.ch/sr15/>

^{iv} https://www.wipo.int/pressroom/en/briefs/tk_ip.html

^v Community radio uses the power of traditional radio, but redefines it to give poor and otherwise marginalized communities a voice. It is a platform where ordinary people own and produce the content they hear on the radio. Although their transmitters may have a small geographic reach, community radio stations allow isolated communities and marginalized people to voice their own concerns and seek solutions to their problems. Community radio has enormous potential to help local communities advance their own response and solutions to the climate crisis.