

Call for Project Partnerships

Migration and Communication Rights Program

Call Launched: April 20th, 2024

Proposals Deadline: May 31st, 2024



A boy takes a selfie on a mobile phone as people gather around a fire inside a refugee processing center in the Serbian village of Presevo, not far from the Macedonian border. Photo: Paul Jeffrey/ACT Alliance

WACC is seeking civil society partners in DAC-list¹ countries in the Middle East, the Caribbean and the Pacific interested in implementing year-long projects that:

- a. Promote migrants' right to access to information and to freedom of expression by establishing networks of migrant citizen journalists, especially using a "constructive journalism" approachⁱⁱ; and/or
- b. Enhance the capacity of migrant groups to monitor the ways migration issues are covered in the media and to build relationships with media organizations in order to promote a rights-based narrative of migration.

This is a highly competitive call. WACC will support only up to **five (5) projects** under this call, two (2) in the Caribbean, two (2) in the Middle East, and one (1) in the Pacific. 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.**

Broadly speaking, projects supported under this theme will align with SDG 16- Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions, SDG 10- Reduced Inequalities, as well as with 2030 Agenda as a whole as migration is a cross-cutting theme. They will also align with the goals of the UN Global Compact for Migration, particularly objective 17: "Eliminate all forms of

discrimination and promote evidence-based public discourse to shape perceptions of migration”.

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.

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

Globally, there are about 70.8 million forcibly displaced people, according to latest figures of the UN refugee agency. Of this, 41.3 million are internally displaced people, 25.9 million are refugees, and 3.5 million are asylum seekers.

As migration and displacement have increased, so has media coverage, not all positive. Media reports have led to increased anxiety and hostility among nationalist and populist politicians as well as other domestic and international actors. In an age of rampant misinformation and “fake news”, migration is becoming a lightning rod for xenophobic groups who seek to undermine trust in public institutions, including the media.

Furthermore, the ability of migrants and refugees to make themselves heard in their host societies and contribute to the public discourse on migration is severely curtailed by linguistic, cultural, economic, and political factors, which in turn further impoverishes public debate. In most cases, migrants have next to no avenues to contribute to the public conversation on migration, despite being at the centre of it.

In this context, WACC believes that, now more than ever, migrants’ rights and communication rights advocates should work together to help enable migrants and refugees to gain greater access to information, access communication platforms in order to have their voices heard, develop media literacy skills, and challenge dominant narratives about migration.

Why Networks of Migrant Citizen Journalists?

WACC believes in promoting a rights-based approach to migration, including migrants’ rights to Access to Information and Freedom of Expression, and in highlighting the importance of inter-cultural dialogue among migrant and host communities. To that end, WACC is interested in supporting the establishment of networks of migrant citizen journalists interested in voicing migrants’ concerns and advancing a rights-based narrative of migration.

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 emergence of a rights-based narrative of migration in their communities and host/transit societies are

- Producing locally relevant media content about issues affecting migrants and host/transit communities,
- Raising awareness about risks, opportunities, and challenges related to migration issues,
- Disseminating key knowledge and information among new audiences,
- Creating dialogue spaces about migration and human rights issues,
- Building bridges between and among migrant communities and host/transit communities in order to encourage mutual understanding and inter-cultural dialogue and collaboration, and
- Implementing campaigns seeking to counter xenophobic discourse.

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

Why Enhance the Capacity of Migrant Groups to Engage with Media Organizations?

The news media play a significant role in shaping people’s perceptions and actions. News media content often perpetuate, challenge, and validate the ways in which social actors are perceived. In this light, WACC believes that media organizations in host/transit societies can play a constructive role in promoting a rights-based narrative of migration that contributes to inter-cultural understanding and social cohesion.

In many cases, due to lack of resources or social capital, migrant associations in host and/or transit societies may not be well positioned to engage media organizations to challenge unbalanced media coverage, express their points of view about migration-related issues, and/or to work together to counter xenophobia and other forms of hater speech. In this context, WACC is interested in supporting migrant associations to build the capacity to engage with media organizations in order to help shape public discourses about migration. Some of the ways in which migrant associations can engage with media organizations to advance a rights-based narrative of migration include:

- Researching (media monitoring) the ways in which migrants are represented in media content and employ findings for advocacy
- Implementing joint strategic communications campaigns to tackle xenophobic discourse and/or inform migrants about rights and entitlements
- Working with community and mainstream journalists and editors interested in giving greater visibility to migration issues from a rights-based perspective and to representing migrants in a balanced and fair way
- Developing media content banks and journalistic guides focused on migration issues examined from an ethics, gender-sensitive, and human rights-based perspective

WACC understands that building trust-based relationships with media organizations is a lengthy and complex process, highly affected by local context, and is open to a variety of approaches.

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 migrants, in 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.

WACC encourages applicants to take climate-related migration vulnerabilities into account when developing proposals.

Who Can Apply?

Civil society organizations legally registered in DAC-list countries in the Pacific, the Middle East, and the Caribbean 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: Migration 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
- 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 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.