



## ENABLING PEOPLE TO BE SEEN AND HEARD

*Our strategy for sustainable peace and justice*

### INTRODUCTION

*Supporting WACC means advancing social justice by ensuring that no community remains unseen or unheard.*

Communication rights are essential for human dignity and social justice. Yet for millions of people, these rights are ignored or denied, deepening inequality, silencing communities, and undermining informed participation in societies.

Fundamental communication rights include freedom of expression, access to information, freedom of the press, and the ability to use one's own language.

WACC exists to help change this. For over 50 years, WACC has enabled marginalized voices to be heard by promoting communication rights as a

foundation for sustainable development, gender equality, and democratic participation.

Through our networks—grassroots to global, faith-based to secular—WACC strengthens communities, influences media and digital landscapes, and advocates internationally for communication justice. **We carry out our work through three major program areas: Digital Justice, Climate Justice, and Gender Justice.**

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### WHY COMMUNICATION RIGHTS MATTER

*Communication rights are not optional—they are foundational. Without them, communities remain invisible, development goals remain out of reach, and inequalities deepen. With them, people can organize, advocate, and transform their societies.*

**Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights affirms that “Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression...**

to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers.” In practice, these rights are routinely violated. From digital censorship to gender bias in the news, millions of people are silenced.

When communication rights are denied, people experience communication

poverty: exclusion from decision-making, lack of access to reliable information, and invisibility in public life. This deepens other forms of poverty and undermines human rights.

**WACC addresses this injustice by ensuring communication is inclusive, democratic, and empowering.** When communication rights are respected, people can claim other rights, challenge inequality, and contribute to sustainable development.



*WACC views communication rights as indispensable to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.*

## COMMUNICATION AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

The United Nations' 2030 Agenda of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) recognizes that sustainable development depends on participation and accountability. Yet too many development strategies neglect communication and information issues. Without access to knowledge, representation in media, and channels to speak out, marginalized communities remain excluded from progress.

Examples:

- Universal access to reproductive healthcare (SDG 3) requires women's ability to access accurate information

and influence health priorities.

- Reducing corruption (SDG 16) depends on journalists' freedom to investigate and inform.
- Climate action (SDG 13) requires local voices and knowledge to be heard alongside scientific expertise.

**WACC views communication rights as indispensable to achieving the SDGs.** We advocate for integrating communication into development policies and policy-making, while supporting grassroots initiatives that empower communities to organize and work for sustainable change.

## WACC'S UNIQUE ROLE

WACC brings together an unparalleled network of grassroots groups, media professionals, academics, faith-based organizations, and international agencies.

We work at multiple levels:

- **Local:** building community capacity to claim rights.
- **National:** providing evidence to support policy reform on media access and representation.
- **International:** influencing debates at the UN, UNESCO, UN Women, and civil society forums.

Our approach combines:

1. **Capacity building** – equipping local communities to access, use, and promote communication and information to claim their rights and

entitlements.

2. **Research and Analysis** – generating monitoring evidence on media representation of women, migrants, and marginalized groups, and assessing media development trends from global and community perspectives.
3. **Education** – equipping individuals and groups to apply ethical and rights-based approaches to today's communication challenges.
4. **Advocacy** – bringing grassroots realities into global communication debates and leveraging our networks to influence policies and practices.

## PROGRAM AREAS

### Building a Just Digital Future for All

Digital technologies have transformed communication, but access alone is not enough. The digital sphere is plagued by disinformation, surveillance, corporate monopolies, and online harassment—especially targeting women and minorities.

WACC works to ensure that digital transformation serves democracy and equality. Our priorities in this area include:

- Promoting digital literacy so individuals and communities can use tools effectively and safely.
- Advocating policies that ensure accessibility, affordability, diversity, and accountability.
- Monitoring misogyny on social media to address tech-facilitated gender-based violence.
- Defending civil society space online against censorship and surveillance.
- Ensuring that existing human rights apply equally in digital spaces.

For example, WACC facilitated attendance by project partners at the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS)+20 where they were active advocates for digital justice, speaking from their own contexts. Read more: <https://waccglobal.org/wsis20-digital-justice-demands-collective-action/>

**Impact:** Communities become active digital citizens, shaping online spaces and policies to advance equity

### No Climate Justice without Communication Justice

The climate crisis disproportionately affects marginalized communities, especially those reliant on natural resources and traditional knowledge. Women are often excluded from decision-making while bearing the heaviest burdens of environmental change.

WACC enables these communities to be heard in climate debates. Our climate justice work includes:

- Supporting citizen journalists and community media to report on local climate impacts.
- Promoting traditional ecological knowledge in sustainable solutions.
- Building communication capacity to organize for change and protect ecosystems.

For example, WACC's Voices of the Amazon project demonstrates how community media are essential to inform, connect, and contribute to local advocacy that impacts national policy. Read more: <https://waccglobal.org/why-we-must-convene-local-actors-to-tackle-the-climate-emergency-the-case-of-radio-ideal/>

**Impact:** Climate-affected communities gain voice and agency, putting forward local solutions to global challenges.

### Promoting Women's Communication Rights and Advancing Gender Equality

Media and communication are powerful arenas where gender inequality is reinforced—or challenged. Today, women remain under-represented in news content, often stereotyped or silenced. Violence against women online further restricts participation.

WACC champions women's communication rights through:

- Media monitoring to provide evidence of gender bias as well as case studies of good practice.
- Social media monitoring for misogyny that helps communities raise awareness of micro aggressions silencing women and girls online.
- Advocacy with media agencies and policymakers for fair representation and equal participation.
- Training for journalists and media organizations.

For example: A cornerstone initiative is WACC's Global Media Monitoring Project (GMMP), the world's largest and longest-running study of gender in the news. The project equips advocates worldwide with data and tools to press for change. Find out more: [www.whomakesthenews.org](http://www.whomakesthenews.org)

**Impact:** Women's voices are amplified, contributing to gender equality in media, politics, and society which brings benefits for all.



*For over five decades, WACC has championed communication for social justice. Today, in a world challenged by digital injustice and a climate emergency, this mission is more urgent than ever.*



## PARTNERING FOR STRONGER IMPACT

Supporting WACC means investing in **voice, visibility, and justice.**

Partnering with us makes it possible to:

- Scale up community projects and enhance local knowledge and skills for ownership, visibility, and sustainability.
- Strengthen global advocacy with media evidence and local voices for inclusive democratic policies and practice.
- Apply critical media skills to participatory media monitoring and rights-centred digital literacy.
- Enable local people and communities to be seen and heard.

## JOIN US IN MAKING EVERY VOICE COUNT

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## ABOUT WACC

WACC is the global leader in defending the full spectrum of communication rights—the right of every person to access information, share ideas, and be heard. We work with communities, faith-based and human rights organizations, media, and international agencies to ensure communication is open, inclusive, and democratic.

Rooted in universal principles of social justice, WACC was founded in 1968 to challenge the misuse of media and

uphold their power for the common good. Today, we unite members and partners across eight global regions to dismantle unjust communication structures and build media that reflect dignity, equality, and diversity.

In a world where media and digital systems are too often profit-driven, homogenizing, and polarizing, WACC champions people-centred communication that strengthens democracy, justice, and community.