



# Speaking up for human rights

2017 ANNUAL REPORT



**WACC**

communication for all

Vision

## Communication for All

Mission

The World Association for Christian Communication (WACC) is an international organization that promotes communication as a basic human right, essential to people’s dignity and community. Rooted in Christian faith, 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.

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Front cover: "The World of Human Rights in Posters" by Paula Scher. "The outrage hand is always symbolic of protest and of hope. This montage was assembled from a collection of posters and messages from around the world representing all causes in the continual battle to overcome prejudice and injustice." From an exhibition at the Center for Civil and Human Rights, Atlanta, Georgia, USA. Photo: Philip Lee.



**Photo Credit: Paul Jeffrey/ACT Alliance**

Leglique Kenvenson looks out the window of a house in the Haitian community of Ganthier, where Mission Sociale des Eglises Hatiennes (MISSEH), a member of the ACT Alliance, helped this family and others in the village rebuild their homes and lives after the village was devastated in 2016 by Hurricane Matthew. Besides providing construction material for housing construction, MISSEH has also provided seeds and tools to farmers, while helping the community organize a more agile and responsive program of disaster risk reduction.

# Executive Summary

In 2017, WACC continued to position itself as the “go-to” international non-governmental organization for the promotion of communication rights. It strengthened its relationships with global and local entities involved in communication for social change, focusing in particular on resource sharing and networking.

The Board of Directors endorsed WACC’s Strategic Plan 2017-2021. It recognizes that WACC operates in social, political, economic and cultural environments both North and South that are continuously changing and presenting new challenges from the perspective of human rights and human dignity.

The 500th anniversary of the Protestant Reformation was celebrated throughout the world. WACC marked the occasion with a Summer School on “Communication rights in the digitised global society” held in Wittenberg, Germany, and organised in cooperation with the Friedrich-Alexander University Erlangen-Nuremberg (FAU) and the German Academic Exchange. Eighteen international students studying for higher degrees took part.

Consultations with project partners contribute to one of the aims of WACC’s Strategic Plan 2017-2021, which is to demonstrate the practical relevance of communication rights to sustainable development. In this respect, WACC brought 19 project partners from 17 countries to a consultation on “Gender and Media: Challenges and Opportunities in the Post 2015 Era”. It took place in New York immediately before the 61st session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW). A second consultation of

WACC project partners took place in Costa Rica, focusing on how their work on communication rights can contribute to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

WACC’s work on media monitoring as a way to study how issues are represented in the news continues to attract attention. A report titled “Changing the Narrative: Media Representation of Refugees and Migrants in Europe” was presented in Brussels in November 2017. It was the result of a project coordinated by WACC-Europe and the Churches’ Commission for Migrants in Europe (CCME). The report made key recommendations for media professionals and news organisations; refugee-led organisations and groups; and civil society organisations working with refugees and migrants.

In 2018, WACC will celebrate its 50th Anniversary. Since 1968, WACC has advocated the democratization of communications both North and South, It has carried out this work in order to bring about greater social justice, to help alleviate poverty, and to promote gender equality.

For WACC, this means enabling communities and vulnerable groups to participate in decision-making processes. It means monitoring progress in realizing communication rights in order to hold governments and gatekeepers to account. Above all, it means prioritizing improved accessibility to information and knowledge in order to empower the most marginalized. For WACC, that is the goal of “Communication for All”.



Photo Credit: Valter Hugo Muniz/ACT Pictures of the Human face of climate change stunt during the COP22

# Message from the Acting General Secretary



*Philip Lee*  
*WACC General Secretary*

Public spaces are crucial to well functioning democratic systems and good governance. They are characterised by communication in its broadest sense (face-to-face interaction and exchanges) and they include “alternative” arenas that challenge the ideologies and assumptions of more orthodox spheres of influence. Ideally, they are spaces that people can choose to enter and leave without hindrance regardless of ethnicity, religion, gender or economic status, and spaces where encounters can take place between people who are relatively powerless and institutions that are much more powerful. Today’s public spaces include digital media platforms.

To be truly public, such spaces must enable everyone to make their concerns known, to be heard, and to participate in decision-making. They must allow processes of transparent deliberation in which all voices have equal weight, even if democratically

taken decisions later disappoint some sectors. In this respect, it requires no great leap of the imagination to see that the mass media of communication ought to constitute a public sphere, one that inherently contributes to a culture of equality and peace. On this basis, it is clear that political and economic control of communications systems, especially the mass media, or monopolisation by governments and corporate interests, are likely to be detrimental to the common good.

Today, digital technologies have given new life to the concept of unfettered communication. Almost everywhere, digital media platforms are transforming the world and the way people communicate. Yet content is less trustworthy and platforms are susceptible to abuse. In part this is because of a lack of independent oversight and in part because ethical practices are difficult to enforce.

Social media are helping to tackle some of the world’s most serious problems, from human rights violations to climate change; they have a positive role to play in education and healthcare, and in responding to natural or human made disaster. At the same time, they have become part and parcel of corporate business, the international banking system, and government repression.

Social media apart, there is another powerful source of information and knowledge: public service media, whose guiding principle is speaking truth to power. Genuine public service media are editorially independent and served by journalists whose

professional dedication to codes of ethics comes first. And public service journalism motivated by the public good – journalism aimed at giving citizens accurate information so that they can make informed decisions about their lives, journalism that exposes wrongdoing and corruption and gives a voice to the less powerful – is the beating heart of a functioning democracy.

“Communication rights enable all people everywhere to express themselves individually and collectively by all means of communication. They are vital to full participation in society and are, therefore, universal human rights belonging to every man, woman, and child.”

This is WACC’s definition of a set of values broader than freedom of expression and opinion – values that underlie democratic governance, media ownership and control, cultural diversity, linguistic rights, and the rights to education, privacy, and self-determination.

Communication rights and the ever more urgent need to build a lasting culture of peace are central to WACC’s vision of a world in which shared human values displace the accumulated weight of history’s tyrannies. WACC’s members, partners and supporters believe that there is only one way to overcome the political, economic, social, and cultural inequalities that have obstructed justice for all – and that is communication for all.



Photo Credit: Paul Jeffrey/ACT Alliance

A Rohingya girl, having just crossed the border from Myanmar, shows her new identity card that she was given by United Nations workers in the Kutupalong Refugee Camp near Cox’s Bazar, Bangladesh, where members of the ACT Alliance provide humanitarian support for the refugees.

More than 600,000 Rohingya have fled government-sanctioned violence in Myanmar for safety in Bangladesh.

# Highlights

## January

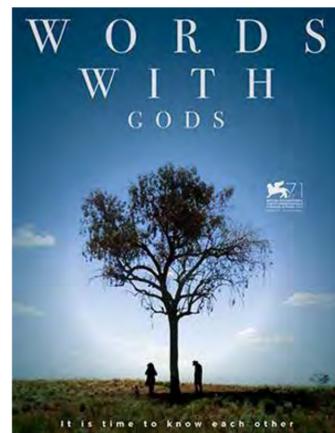
■ At the beginning of 2017, WACC strengthened its ongoing relationship with **ACT Alliance** by providing office space for ACT's communications desk and its Head of Communications, Simon Chambers, who joined the ACT Alliance secretariat on 1 January 2017. Chambers is tasked with leading the development and implementation of ACT Alliance's communications strategy, to inspire increased member-driven brand promotion, to expand ACT Alliance's reputation as a thought leader and to support increased access to external funding opportunities.



## February

■ As a contribution to **Interfaith Harmony Week**, WACC partnered with Toronto's Diaspora Film Festival to screen the film "Words with Gods", featuring nine powerful stories of faith, created by some of the world's most celebrated filmmakers. A spectrum of beliefs is represented in the film, with each filmmaker reflecting on the one closest to the culture they depict in their story.

A panel discussion led by WACC Deputy General Secretary Philip Lee followed the screening together with Tracey Erin Smith, founder of the award-winning Soulo Theatre Company, Areej Rashid, WACC Development Coordinator, and Shahram Tabe, film critic and director of the Diaspora Film Festival.



## March

■ WACC brought 19 project partners from 17 countries to participate in a consultation on "**Gender and Media: Challenges and Opportunities in the Post 2015 Era**". It took place 9-11 March 2017 in New York immediately before the 61st session of the annual Commission on the Status of Women (CSW). The CSW is the principal global intergovernmental body exclusively dedicated to the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women.

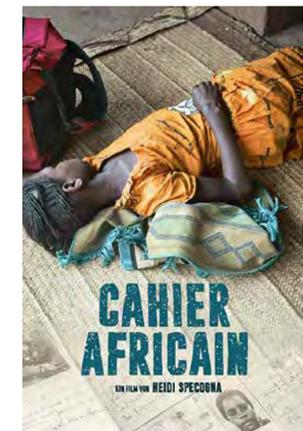
WACC partners also took part in a number of parallel events, including "Rewriting the Script: The Role of Faith and Media in Promoting Women's Economic Justice" organized by WACC North America, a joint UN Women/Global Alliance on Media and Gender (GAMAG) session on gender standards for media, and "Leaving No-one behind: Women's economic empowerment, sexual and gender-based violence and faith" organized by Side by Side and We Will Speak Out.



## April

■ The **WACC-SIGNIS Human Rights Award 2016** went to the documentary film *Cahier africain* directed by Heidi Specogna. WACC and its partner SIGNIS made this award for its very human perspective on the horror of conflict situations that impact the lives of ordinary people, especially women and children. Its human rights perspective is exemplary. *Cahier africain* also won the 2017 Swiss Film Award for best documentary.

The film's director says that, "The fate of the women and their children begotten by force is a tragedy the world turns a blind eye to. It's estimated that, in the Central African region in recent years alone, more than 100,000 women have been violated during armed conflict. By way of comparison, after the Rwandan genocide approximately 20,000 children came into life with this background."



## June

■ The prize of the international jury at the 19th European **Television Festival of Religious Programmes** went to a television film dealing with how eight Dutch monks remaining in a monastery originally built for 120 decided to move to Schiermonnikoog, an island in the north of the Netherlands. Written and directed by Anne-Christine Girardot for the Dutch KRO-NCRV network, *Schiermonnikoog* (The Island of the Monks), portrays eight monks left in the Sion monastery as they contemplate that their community may cease to exist.

More than 500 years ago, before the Reformation, novices worked on the island in their grey habits, but the eight monks are confronted by turmoil, doubts and fear as they leave their long-established community for a new future. The television festival is organised by the European sections of the World Association for Christian Communication (WACC) and the World Catholic Association for Communication (SIGNIS).



*Schiermonnikoog* written and directed by Anne-Christine Girardot for the Dutch KRO-NCRV network

## July

■ WACC took part in the 60th annual conference of the **International Association for Media and Communication Research** (IAMCR), held July 16-20 in Cartagena, Colombia. WACC is an institutional member. The conference was organized in partnership with the Corporación Universitaria Minuto de Dios (UNIMUNUTO) and is being attended by over 1,500 communication researchers and practitioners from around the world.

Key ideas revolved around the landscape of media development affected by a marked decline in trust in journalism, growing polarization, a global migration crisis, and the sense that media is being instrumentalized to advance certain political agendas. In this context, it is more important than ever to support independent media, and to foster policy environments that promote media pluralism and democracy.

## August

■ “Communication rights in the digitised global society” was the theme of a **Summer School** marking the 500th anniversary of the Protestant Reformation held 31 July to 5 August 2017 in Wittenberg, Germany. Organised in cooperation with the Friedrich-Alexander University Erlangen-Nuremberg (FAU), WACC, and the German Academic Exchange Service, the Summer School enabled participation by 18 international students studying for higher degrees.

A well-crafted programme saw presentations and discussions on communication rights, gender representations in the media landscape, the Reformation as media revolution, media and religion from the perspective of Eastern Christianity, resurgent Protestantism in North America, media and refugees in Europe, religious tolerance and freedom of expression, and the public and private in the digital world.



Attendees of Summer School marking the 500th anniversary of the Protestant Reformation.

## September

■ WACC partner **Radyo Lumad** began broadcasting 18 September 2017 from the University of the Philippines – Diliman campus. The community radio station was set up with the support of the European Union (EU) and under WACC’s programme on communication for social change. Programmes will air every day in the province of Bukidnon and nearby areas, featuring stories from the Lumad communities of Northern Mindanao and Caraga regions.

Radyo Lumad 1575 AM expresses the struggles of the Lumad who have been marginalized, discriminated, and oppressed. The new station’s programming is dedicated to Lumad stories, news reports, alternative music and advocacy songs produced by Mindanao musicians, and the traditional music of the Lumad communities.



Lumad community radio station launches at Sitio Sandugo

## October

■ **A Consultation of WACC project partners** took place in Costa Rica, 23-25 October, to focus on how their work on communication rights can contribute to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The event was held in cooperation with the Fundación de la Universidad Estatal a Distancia de Costa Rica (FUNDEPREDI). Some 25 partners from Latin America and the Caribbean participated.

A number of regional non-governmental organisations were represented at the meeting, including UNICEF, Cultural Survival, Agencia Latinoamericana y Caribeña de Comunicación (ALC), Asociación Latinoamericana de Educación Radiofónica (ALER), Centro Internacional de Estudios Superiores de Comunicación para América Latina (CIESPAL), and Asociación Mundial de Radios Comunitarias (AMARC). Consultations with project partners contribute to one of the aims of WACC’s Strategic Plan 2017-2021, which is to demonstrate the practical relevance of communication rights to sustainable development.

## November

■ A “pattern of invisibility” of refugees and migrants themselves can be found in news reports on asylum and migration in European media, according to a new report presented in Brussels on 16 November 2017. Entitled, **“Changing the Narrative: Media Representation of Refugees and Migrants in Europe”**, the report was the result of a 12-month project coordinated by the World Association for Christian Communication – Europe region (WACC Europe) and the Churches’ Commission for Migrants in Europe (CCME).

Project findings were based on media monitoring in seven European countries – Greece, Italy, Spain, Serbia, the United Kingdom, Sweden and Norway. The report made key recommendations for media professionals and news organisations; refugee-led organisations and groups; and civil society organisations working with refugees and migrants.

Following the launch of the report, a follow up discussion was organized in partnership with One World Media and the British Red Cross. It took place in London, UK, and involved key decision-makers in newsrooms. Several top media professionals were present among the 30 invited guests from the UK media landscape.

“Changing the Narrative: Media Representation of Refugees and Migrants in Europe”, released in Brussels on 16 November 2017.

## December

■ Partly as a follow up to the launch of the report “Changing the Narrative: Media Representation of Refugees and Migrants in Europe”, on **International Migrants Day 2017**, WACC called on communicators everywhere to amplify the voices of migrants, refugees, and internally displaced people so that they can live in dignity, security, and peace. The role of the news media is crucial to presenting accurate information, which in many respects can only be obtained by amplifying the voices of migrants and refugees themselves.

■ Thirty-five representatives of faith-based and secular civil society organizations from 18 countries participated in WACC’s **Communication Rights School** held in Nairobi, Kenya, 11-15 December 2017, in collaboration with the All Africa Conference of Churches (AACC). Facilitated by WACC staff, the School’s aim was to build knowledge, skills and competencies on communication rights in the context of local realities. It also aimed to strengthen a network of communicators able to bring audiences to understand, recognize and champion communication rights that address issues of privilege and exclusion, dominance and subordination.



Photo Credit: Paul Jeffrey

A primary school class in Panyagor, a town in South Sudan's Jonglei State, meets in a temporary shelter.

The Lutheran World Federation, a member of the ACT Alliance, is helping families in the troubled region, which is torn by both war and drought, to educate their children, with a special focus on insuring that girls enter and remain in school. LWF is building new permanent classrooms as schools expand their services. South Sudan

# Consultations with Project Partners

Between December 2016 and October 2017, WACC organized three project partner consultations on the links between communication rights and Agenda 2030. Representatives of approximately 70 organizations from around the world participated in these events. Consultations focused

primarily on the communication rights links with SDGs 5, 9, and 16, as well as on essential communication rights issues missing from Agenda 2030, such as the democratization of media and communication. WACC will release a document with key insights during the first half of 2018.

## Hong Kong



Photo Credit: Christopher Pasion

WACC held a partners' consultation entitled "Linking Communication Rights to the Sustainable Development Goals" for representatives of 27 of its community and citizen's media project partners from Asia and Africa on December 14-16, 2016. The event was organized in partnership with Hong Kong-based NGO Asia Pacific Mission for Migrants (APMM).

## New York



Photo Credit: WACC Global

WACC held a partners' consultation entitled "Gender and Media: Challenges and Opportunities in the Post 2015 Era" March 9-11, 2017, for 25 of its gender and communication project partners from around the world. The event took place in New York City, which allowed partners to participate in the 61st session of the annual Commission on the Status of Women (CSW).

## Costa Rica



Photo Credit: WACC Global

WACC held a partners' consultation entitled "Communication for Social Change: Beyond the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)" October 23-25, 2017, for 25 of its community, indigenous, and citizen's media project partners from Latin America and the Caribbean. The event took place in San José, Costa Rica, in collaboration with Fundación de la Universidad Estatal a Distancia UNED de Costa Rica (FUNDEPREDI)

# Stories from Project Partners

## Georgia

*StudioMobile - Accent on Action Union*



Photo Credit: StudioMobile

Discrimination against ethno-cultural minorities and forcibly displaced people is a significant problem in Georgia. This problem is accentuated by a lack of communication channels between these groups and broader Georgian society, limited access to information in minority languages, and the absence of a lingua franca that would enable greater dialogue and engagement. In this context, this project sought to build the communication capacity of key civil society actors in four regions of Georgia in order to enable them to promote media literacy and digital

storytelling in their communities. By the end of the project, 54 people, most of whom were women from ethno-cultural minority communities in the regions of Samegrelo, Shida Kartli, Kvemo Kartli, Samtskhe-Javakhet, had benefited from training. Workshops focused on focused on rights frameworks, and on the strategic use of digital media as tools in support of human rights advocacy efforts. The most significant change the project helped bring about is the change in attitude among some of the participants, who now feel they can “do something useful for their

communities” by bringing attention and visibility to local issues. This project also enabled StudioMobile to strengthen relationships with CSOs in the four regions of intervention, which puts them in a strong position to develop new programmes together. All in all, the project helped to reduce discrimination, provided new tools for inter-cultural communication, and enabled communities to make their concerns more visible to broader audiences.



Photo Credit: StudioMobile



Photo Credit: StudioMobile

## Guatemala

### Programa de Desarrollo Intercultural (PRODINTER)- Radio Ixchel

Radio Ixchel is a community radio station serving the community of Sumpango Sacatepéquez, approximately 43 km from Guatemala City. The station works to meet the communication needs of community members, including the need for locally relevant information, the availability of culturally sensitive content, and the preservation of the Kaqchikel language.

In recent years, the Sumpango Sacatepéquez community has seen a decline in the use of indigenous language and reduced appreciation and understanding of indigenous worldviews, especially among young people. This is the result of, among other things, close proximity to the

capital city. Radio Ixchel also needs a new generation of volunteers (editors, community reporters, etc.) to help reinvigorate the station and meet its social change objectives.

This project focused on creating new participation spaces for children and youth within Radio Ixchel in order to revive the use of the Kaqchikel language and to attract new volunteers to sustain the station in the future.

Radio Ixchel achieved these objectives by establishing a media centre where young people can borrow media production equipment and edit their video and audio work, and where community members can access the internet. It also strengthened

the communication capacity of children and youth. By the end of the project, 20 boys and girls (ages 5-14) had benefitted from a 5-month long training programme focused on media production, media literacy, children's rights, and the Kaqchikel language and culture. Participants produced content for broadcast on Radio Ixchel and other partner community radio stations. Many girls and boys have become active members of the station.

The most noticeable change has been the increased levels of confidence among some of the training participants, many of whom say they "are no longer afraid of speaking up and making themselves heard".



Photo Credit: StudioMobile

## Dominican Republic

### Espacio de Comunicación Insular



Photo Credit: Espacio de Comunicación Insular

This project sought to support marginalized people and communities in the interior of the Dominican Republic. It focused on training the leaders of local civil society organizations to use multimedia tools to help them to better promote and defend human rights in their communities. The rationale for the training was that knowing how to use digital platforms and tools such as photography, radio, video and social networks would enable community leaders to better tackle issues related to racial prejudice and marginalization.

Eighteen community leaders (11 women and 7 men) benefited from the training and produced 25 radio programmes on diverse topics, though many focused on the rights of migrants

and the rights of Haitian Dominicans. The networks formed during the training continue to exchange information.

As part of the project, an online community radio station called Radio Cimarrona was launched (<http://radiocimarrona.com/>) as a way to advance the agendas of the community organizations supported.

## Kenya

### Association of Media Women in Kenya (AMWIK)



A communication lecturer gives the context in which online violence against women occurs - Photo Credit: AMWIK



Dr. Lucy Gichaga, a Digital Media Lecturer at USIU shares her views on online violence against women from a trainer's perspective- Photo Credit: AMWIK

Internet usage in Kenya has grown exponentially over the past decade to reach 89% of the population in 2017 from less than 1% in 2000, (ITU, 2017). Unfortunately, greater connectivity has brought with it online violence against women, particularly against women journalists and human rights activists, a phenomenon that excludes women and girls from decision-making and agenda-setting processes in an increasingly Internet-mediated public sphere. Some of the challenges that women journalists and human rights defenders face include smear campaigns on social media, usually involving trolls, with the aim of damaging credibility and intimidating sources, online threats of violence, cyber-stalking, illegal surveillance and privacy breaches and online sexual harassment.

This project sought to help develop solutions to this issue by producing evidence on the ways in which online violence takes place and by using research findings to raise awareness among journalists and the general public.

Research results include a baseline survey on the interactions of women journalists who have encountered online violence with the legal and policy frameworks dealing with ICT and online security. The baseline research showed that online violence against women journalists is increasing and is often preventing women from engaging online, and that such violence affects both women in established “mainstream” media outlets and in community and/or citizen media (e.g. bloggers). The research also showed that despite the existence of a favourable legal and policy environment, efforts to address online violence against women on the part of media houses, government,

and ICT companies that provide digital communication platforms have been limited and weak.

These findings were disseminated during a Media Forum in late 2017 that included 41 journalists, social media managers and communication lecturers from Kenyan universities. AMWIK is in the process of developing a new project to implement some of the research project’s recommendations.



Photo Credit: Joel Carillet/ACT Alliance A 25-year-old Rohingya refugee woman stands with two children outside a shelter in the sprawling Kutupalong refugee camp in Bangladesh on October 29, 2017. Photo by Joel Carillet for the ACT Alliance.

## Vietnam

*Research Centre for Gender, Family and Environment in Development (CGFED)*



Flooding is often responsible for plunging people into debt. When the rice crop is destroyed, farmers must borrow to feed their families and pay monthly interest. With the NGO grant money, some have been enabled to buy rice seed and repay some of the loan. Photo: ACT Alliance/Conor Wall.

Gender stereotyping in media content results in unbalanced representation of women and men. Agricultural news stories in Vietnam are characterized by similar patterns. Voices of women farmers are rarely heard despite the fact that women make up 60% of the agricultural workforce.

This project sought to address the gender bias of journalists and communication professionals covering agricultural issues through media monitoring and advocacy. The project resulted in new data, collected through media monitoring, covering agriculture news published over a 6-month period. Data was published and made accessible to communicators and journalists throughout the country. Instruments designed for monitoring agriculture news from a gender perspective developed through this project are available for adaptation and/or replication in other contexts.

In addition, 18 communicators and journalists responsible for reporting agriculture news, most of who were women, benefited from hands-on learning on ways to tackle media gender stereotypes. All participants shared their change in knowledge about gender and skills in producing the communication products, demonstrating greater gender sensitivity in receiving and creating news content.

## Palestine

*Women, Media and Development (TAM)*

Palestinian women are virtually invisible in media productions about peace, conflict, security, and rights violations. Palestinian women make up half the Palestinian population yet they are significantly under-represented in all kinds of media outlets and productions.

This project, launched in early 2017, is contributing to changing this situation by engaging with media students (mainly from Bethlehem and Hebron), national media outlets, and media-related organizations, in order to raise their awareness and build their capacities on women's rights, gender equality, and other human rights international treaties such as CEDAW and UNSCR 1325. A core group of activists will be equipped with media production and advocacy skills.

In addition, the project will result in a media monitoring report containing findings about the representation of women in issues related to peace, security, conflict and rights violations. The research findings will be published or broadcast at the national level.

Ultimately, the project seeks to promote a fair and balanced image of women in the media. Project activities will end in early 2018.



## Fiji

*FemLINK Pacific: Media Initiatives for Women*



This project strengthened collaboration and knowledge exchange among 7 women-led community media initiatives in francophone countries of the Pacific, in particular Tahiti, New Caledonia, Fiji, Solomon Islands, Vanuatu, and Tonga. Increased collaboration, especially through joint community radio production, is pivotal for the coalition work that leads to the formulation of common advocacy and intervention strategies.

The main mechanism to achieve these goals was a regional community radio exchange entitled "Peace on the Airwaves", which resulted in different types of radio content being produced and broadcast in a coordinated manner in the Solomon Islands, Tonga, Vanuatu, Bougainville (Papua New Guinea), and Fiji by different community broadcasters. Over 1,800 soundbytes for community radio were produced. In addition, 8 representatives from different the Pacific community media organization participated in a Regional CSO Forum, during which a session on media monitoring and gender was held, resulting in development of a regional monitoring strategy. The meetings

of the regional partners were used for the planning and coordination of production and broadcasting activities, and resulted in the development of a policy paper on women and peace in community media.

Importantly, the project also helped increase the availability of media content that challenges gender inequality in the region. For example, FemLINK Pacific produced a radio documentary pilot series entitled "Sisters of the Pacific Ocean", which was used for advocacy purposes and is being disseminated through the network. This series has been produced in the context of FemLINK Pacific's MOU with the Pacific Community (SPC). Other media content produced during project implementation can be accessed [here](#).

While the long term impact of the project is yet to be seen, it is expected that a more coordinated feminist media network in the Pacific capable of highlighting women's contributions to peace and development will emerge.

# 2018 – A Time for Celebration

In 2018, WACC will celebrate its 50th Anniversary. Since 1968, under eight presidents and five general secretaries, with the dedication of hundreds of regional executive committee members, with the skills of hundreds of project partners and the support of thousands of corporate and individual members worldwide, WACC has become a leader in the promotion of communication rights.

It has carried out this work in order to bring about greater social justice, to help alleviate poverty, and to promote gender equality. Yet, millions of people on every continent still lack a voice, which is a violation of their right to express themselves freely, to be heard by decision-makers, to be represented accurately in the media, and to access the information they need to change their lives. For this reason, WACC promotes communication for all.

## History

WACC originated in the United Kingdom. It emerged from the chaos and trauma of 1945 in response to the Nazi propaganda machine, the ideological “iron curtain” that divided post-war Europe, and the imminent development of public television broadcasting.

In 1950, Christian leaders representing various groups in Europe and the USA convened an informal International Conference on Religious Broadcasting to debate moral and ethical questions. In 1953, that group formed an International Study Committee on Church Broadcasting and Television Activity, which established the World Committee for Christian Broadcasting (WCCB).

Thereafter, Christian communication needs and practices, especially in “developing countries”, became the focus of concerted plans of action supported by the mission agencies of the World Council of Churches (WCC), the Lutheran World Federation (LWF), and the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the USA (NCCCUSA). Christian broadcasters, publishers, and trainers found common ground in the WCCB, which gradually evolved to become the World Association for Christian Communication (WACC) in 1968.

In its early days, WACC focused on radio and television broadcasting, Christian literature development, media literacy, and meeting the need for communication training in the global South. In response to technological developments such as emerging satellite technologies, political changes such as calls for independence and the challenge to Apartheid in South Africa, in 1975 WACC broadened its mandate to include print media, electronic media, and periodicals development. This marked the beginning of WACC’s long-term commitment to freedom of expression and the right to communicate.

During the 1970s WACC further reinforced its political stance by convening an international study on the economic, social, and ethical implications of new electronic technologies, taking part in the World Administrative Radio Conference (WARC), and initiating discussions in church circles on the New World Information and Communication Order (NWICO).

WACC marked the 1980s with an extensive Intercultural Communication Programme, a Theological Studies Programme, an international series of books on communication with Sage Publications, and a Women’s Programme that would lead to the landmark conference on “Women Empowering Communication” (1994), WACC’s programme on Media & Gender Justice, and, eventually, to its long-running, flagship Global Media Monitoring Project (GMMP).

In 1989, WACC organized its first global Congress on a theme related to communication (to be repeated every six years) and, as a result, initiated its first five-year Study and Action Programme. In 1996, WACC convened the Platform for Cooperation on Communication and Democratization, which was instrumental in establishing the Communication Rights in the Information Society (CRIS) Campaign. The CRIS Campaign, whose secretariat WACC hosted 2002-05, represented the voices of civil society organizations at the UN-convened World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) in Geneva (2003) and Tunis (2005).

In 2006 WACC moved its global secretariat from London, UK, to Toronto, Canada, where it elaborated a new way of working that at first saw six key programme areas with crosscutting themes whose common purpose was recognizing and building on communication rights in order to advance social justice. Most recently, under the “umbrella” of communication rights, two themes were chosen as representative of current developments: “Communication for Social Change” and “Communication and Gender”



For WACC, taking a rights-based approach to communication means prioritizing improved levels of accessibility and affordability, so that the most marginalized and “least served” are empowered and inequalities reduced; it means enabling communities and vulnerable groups to participate in decision-making processes; and it means monitoring progress in realizing communication rights in order to hold governments and gatekeepers to account.

In this respect, for WACC the link between communication rights and sustainable development is clear: traditional mass media, social media, and digital platforms can contribute to the creation of new public spaces for voices to challenge the social, economic and political structures that exclude people and communities. They can also help enable civic participation, relationships based on mutual accountability and trust, pluralism, and community empowerment.

### Priority Areas

#### *Communication for Social Change*

With the convergence of traditional and digital media, WACC sees an opportunity to focus on how media platforms can help advance communication rights in practice while also contributing to broader social change. Projects supported under this programme will strengthen the work of civil society organizations in the implementation of communication for social change efforts such as citizen journalism, community media, citizen-led media for peace, and “monitoring of poverty reporting” to advance the democratic participation and active citizenship of marginalized peoples and communities.

#### *Gender and Communication*

Through media monitoring, projects will generate evidence on the gender dimensions of news reports. The monitoring findings are applied to change actions such as awareness creation, critical media literacy training, advocacy and engagement with media professionals on gender issues in media policy and practice. The focus will be on supporting civil society groups in areas of the Global South lacking a strong sub-regional or regional coordination of gender and media work. Projects will monitor gender portrayal and representation in major national or regional print, radio, television and/or internet news media.

#### *The Global Media Monitoring Project (GMMP)*

WACC has an ongoing commitment to implement the Global Media Monitoring Project (GMMP), undertaken every five years. Women’s enjoyment of their right to freedom of expression and information is limited by under-representation, by insufficient coverage of their actions, aspirations and contributions, and by biased and stereotypical representation in news media reporting around the world. Under-representation and misrepresentation then reinforces gender discrimination. Since 1995, the GMMP has provided facts and figures highlighting the under-representation and misrepresentation of women and girls in the world’s news media, providing valuable data and analysis to inform advocacy in changing media gender bias.



#### *End Media Sexism Campaign*

In 2016 WACC, the Global Media Monitoring Project (GMMP) Network and other partners launched a campaign to end news media sexism by 2020. The campaign start date coincided with Human Rights Day to underline gender equality in the media as a human rights issue. The “End News Media Sexism” campaign will encourage and assist national advocacy to change media policy and journalistic practice. It aims to support and highlight intensive efforts in several countries with the hope that new evidence will emerge on strategies that work to bring about fair and equal representation of women and men in the news media.



The campaign followed on the launch of the Step It Up for Gender Equality Media Compact by UN Women, urging media organisations to play their part in advancing gender equality and women’s rights. Various tools have been provided on the campaign web site for audiences to gain a critical awareness of gender issues in media content and to engage with their local media.

#### *“A Labour of Love”*

In 2000, WACC published the early years of its history in a book subtitled “A Labour of Love”. In it, WACC’s first executive director, Revd. Edwin H. Robertson wrote, “My memories of WACC in all its forms are of its readiness to rise to the challenge of change.” Long may WACC continue to rise to the challenge!



Photo Credit: Paul Jeffrey/ACT Alliance

Children in Jean-Rabel in northwestern Haiti study in a temporary classroom while work continues on reconstructing an elementary school that was heavily damaged during Hurricane Matthew in 2016. Church World Service, a member of the ACT Alliance, is helping the community repair the school.

## End News Media Sexism campaign

WACC launched its End News Media Sexism (ENMS) by 2020 advocacy campaign on Human Rights Day, 10 December 2016, with the objective to step up action towards bringing news media accountability for gender equality. The campaign was spurred by the lack of progress on gender equality in and through the media – as revealed through the GMMP – despite considerable effort by activists, allies in the media, media training institutions and others.

The campaign seeks to encourage and assist national advocacy to change media policy and journalistic practice. It aims to support and highlight intensive efforts in several countries with the hope that new evidence will emerge on strategies that work to bring about fair and equal representation of women and men in the news media. The campaign takes a variety of approaches and provides a range of tools to build audience-awareness about gender issues in media content as well as to engage with the media. The tools are available on the campaign [webpage](#).

The campaign launch was publicized through relevant listservs such as the Women’s UN Resources Network (WUNRN), via email to WACC members and partners, on WACC’s websites and social media channels, through ACT Alliance, the International Federation of Journalists (IFJ) and other networks. The campaign was picked up by influential allies such as the [Communication Initiative](#). An effort was made to connect with complementary campaigns such as the [Side by Side movement](#) led by Christian Aid and the White Ribbon (Canada) movement of men and boys working to end violence against women.

WACC reached out to the GMMP network and beyond to mobilize support and engagement in the ENMS campaign. The strategy led to interviews with partners arguing in support of the [campaign](#), [blog posts](#), and, framing of content on the website around the ENMS theme.



**Show your solidarity**

Wear this bracelet to promote the campaign.

Order it [here](#).

## Global Alliance for Media and Gender (GAMAG)



WACC was named to the position of Interim General Secretary of the Global Alliance for Media and Gender (GAMAG) in September 2016, following the resignation of the previous General Secretary and pending elections of new officials at GAMAG’s next General Assembly. GAMAG is a global network of media industry organisations, civil society and other actors working “to achieve gender equality in and through the media and ICTs in all formats and locations and across different forms of ownership” (Vision statement)

The Secretary General plays a critical role in supporting the Chair – currently held by the International Association for Media and Communication Research (IAMCR) on an interim basis. The Secretary General operationalizes GAMAG’s goals by: putting into place a mechanism for keeping formal records and membership lists; coordinating

the implementation of the decisions of GAMAG’s International Steering Committee (ISC); monitoring the implementation of the Strategic Plan; scheduling meetings; and setting meeting agendas in consultation with the Chair; taking minutes of meetings, and; preparing the annual narrative and financial reports of GAMAG.

In March 2017 within the framework of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) meetings, WACC and IAMCR with support from UNESCO convened a session titled “Towards CSW 2018: Media, ICTs and Women’s Human Rights”. Approximately 30 participants attended to discuss, among other issues, a strategy for ensuring GAMAG’s impact at the 2018 CSW which has announced “women and the media” as the focus review theme.

In January 2018 WACC received a second grant from IPDC-UNESCO on behalf of GAMAG for the development of position papers and audiovisual resources for media professionals interested in adopting gender-transformative approaches to their work. This project is expected to report by June 2018.

Under the leadership of WACC and the interim Chair International Association for Media and Communication Research (IAMCR), GAMAG has gained visibility, prominence and been publicly appreciated by its members and [founding body UNESCO](#).

# Media Development

*Media Development is an international quarterly journal dedicated to the theory and practice of communication around the world. Many contributors write from the perspective of the South, highlighting social, cultural, and spiritual values.*

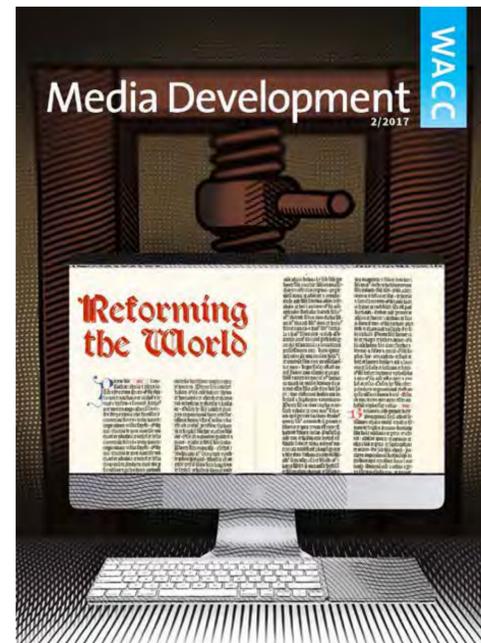
*Media Development publishes informed and critical opinions on a broad range of topics; relevant documents and materials; reports of events and conferences; a section on cinema; occasional book reviews.*

*Media Development seeks to keep abreast of developments in the field of mass, community and social media and to articulate common concerns in the search for equality, justice and human dignity in communication.*



*1/2017: Digital Futures*

Digital communication technologies are transforming both the world and people themselves. At the same time, there is a perception that content is less trustworthy and that digital media are more susceptible to abuse. It is too early to tell how these profound changes will play out in the long-term, but people of the late 21st century will undoubtedly be communicating in entirely different ways.



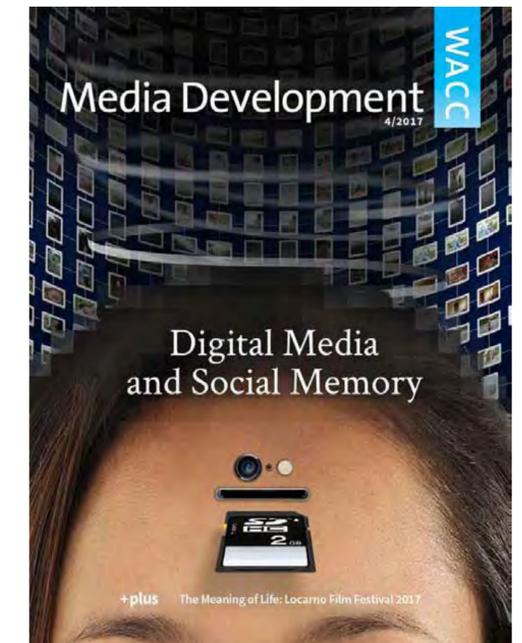
*2/2017: Reforming the World*

Celebrating 500 years of the Reformation, what does it mean today to promote media reform and the right to communicate? Communicators - especially journalists and others who open people's eyes and ears to inequality and injustice - have a moral duty to tell it like it is, to disturb the world, and to dream of a better future for all.



*3/2017: Changing Media, Changing Perceptions*

Great expectations have been placed on social media platforms as a panacea for the challenges facing societies worldwide. In particular, social media platforms are expected to strengthen open dialogue and public debate and to be sources of information and knowledge. They could have a revolutionary impact in the field of communication for development - provided they could demonstrate reliability, transparency, and legitimacy.



*4/2017: Digital Media and Social Memory*

How are digital media technologies transforming human relationships, human behaviour, and human beings themselves? It is important to test some of the assumptions made about digital media and, in particular, to tease out implications for the way society sees itself, records itself, and remembers itself.

# SIGNIS-WACC

## Human Rights Award 2017

The award for 2017 went to *Maman Colonelle* directed by Dieudo Hamadi. This 72-minute documentary continues the film-maker's quest to chronicle the social realities of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) with a portrait of a policewoman struggling against the odds to stop sexual abuse in her new posting in a big city.

Dieudo Hamadi was born in 1984 in Kisangani (DRC) and studied Medicine at University of Kisangani. Having attended several documentary workshops, he has directed *Atalaku* (2013), *National Diploma* (2014) – which respectively explored the commotion surrounding Congo's presidential elections and nationwide examination system – *Maman Colonelle* (2017) and most recently *Kinshasa Makambo* (2018).

At the Berlin Film Festival in 2017, the Ecumenical Jury – whose work is supported in part by WACC – gave the film a commendation saying “Filmmaker Dieudo Hamadi gets close to his subject, points to the traumatic aftermath of violence, and then shows the potential, if not for a utopia, at least for a reconstructed community of survivors where hope may emerge.”

*Synopsis:* "Colonel Honorine Munyole is a robust 44-year-old widow and mother of seven young children – four of her own, three adopted. She wields her uniform, beret and black handbag like a protective shield, which her daily work desperately requires. More or less on her own, she runs a small police unit dedicated to protecting women who have been raped and children who have suffered abuse in the war-plagued regions of the Congo.

At the start of *Maman Colonelle*, she is transferred from Bukavu to Kisangani, arriving only to discover her future home and office in a state of desolation. While she deals with such practical obstacles with determination, the traumas of the people around her take on nightmarish dimensions. The film follows her mission with growing fascination and is both a tribute to a heroine and a document of what can be done with love and determination.



Dieudo Hamadi,  
Director



Stills from the film *Maman Colonelle*



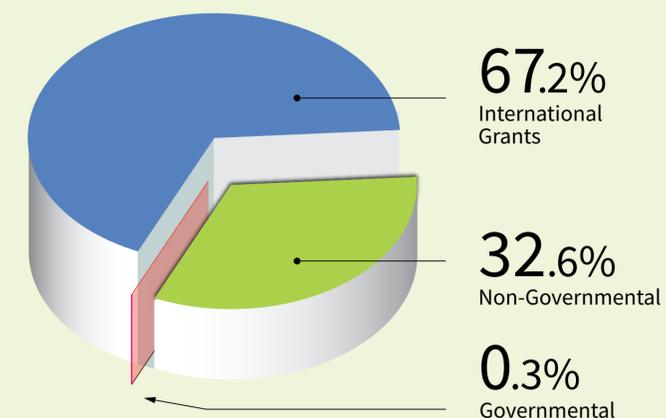
# Financial Overview

## WACC Canada

In 2017, WACC spent 86.8% of income directly and indirectly on programs and project partners around the world 8.4% was spent on governance, while 4.8% was spent on fundraising and development activities to build relationships with existing and potential partners in order to expand WACC's reach and strengthen its ability to deliver on all its strategic priorities in a sustainable way. As a global organization, WACC's funding is 67.1% from international partners. WACC also has nongovernment income of 32.6% and self-generated income of 5.0%. WACC continues to increase its capacity and to focus efforts on diversifying its income streams.

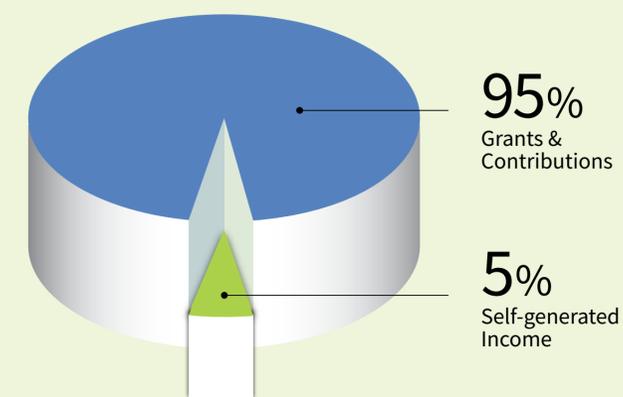
### Income by Source

Governmental	5,819	0.26%
International Grants	1,486,635	67.15%
Non-Governmental	721,486	32.59%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>2,213,940</b>	<b>100%</b>



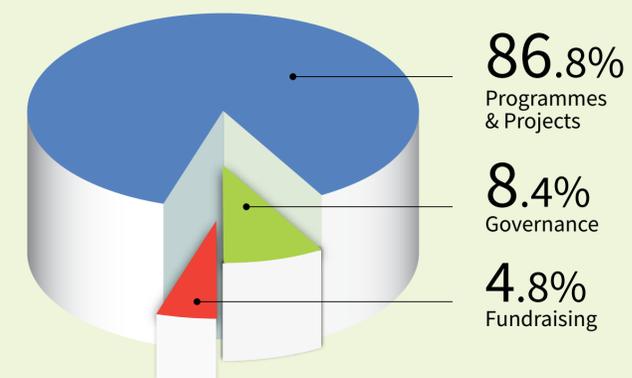
### Income by Type

Grants & Contributions	2,102,454	94.96%
Self-generated Income	111,486	5.04%
	<b>2,213,940</b>	<b>100%</b>



### Expenses by Type

Programmes & Projects	1,635,688	86.79%
Governance	159,037	8.44%
Fundraising	89,823	4.77%
	<b>1,884,548</b>	<b>100%</b>

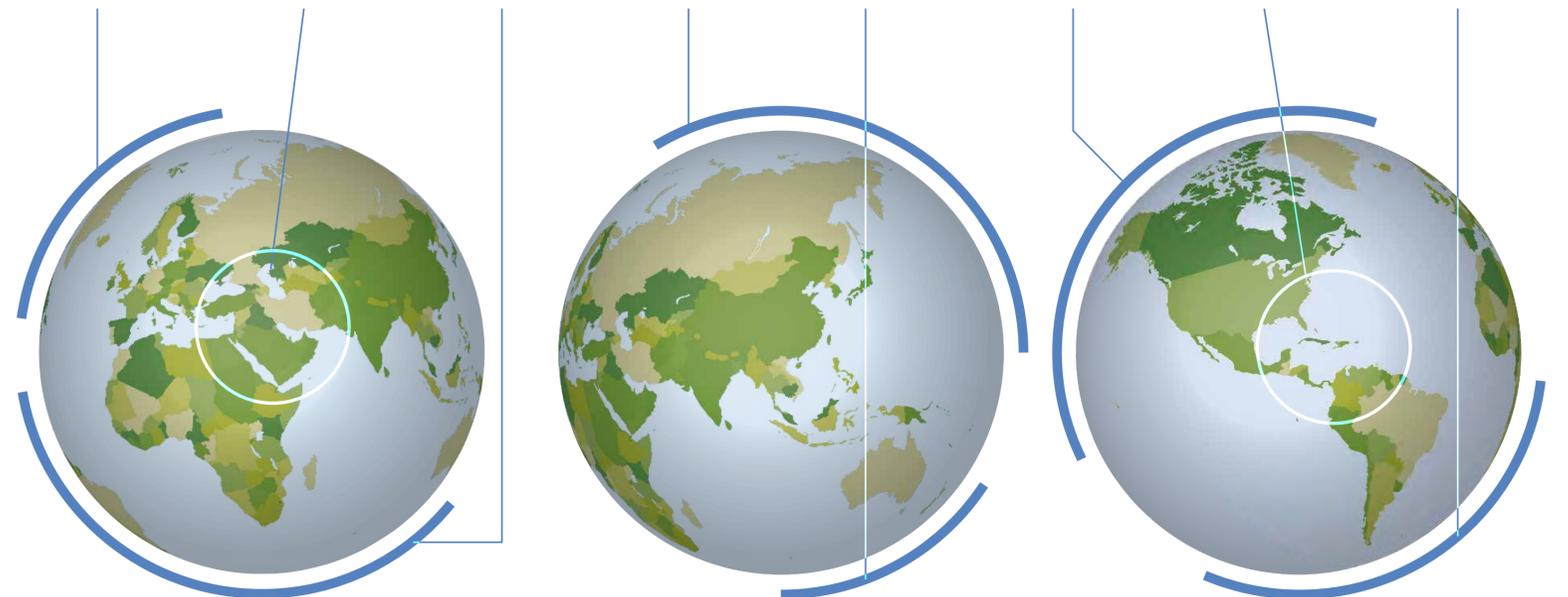
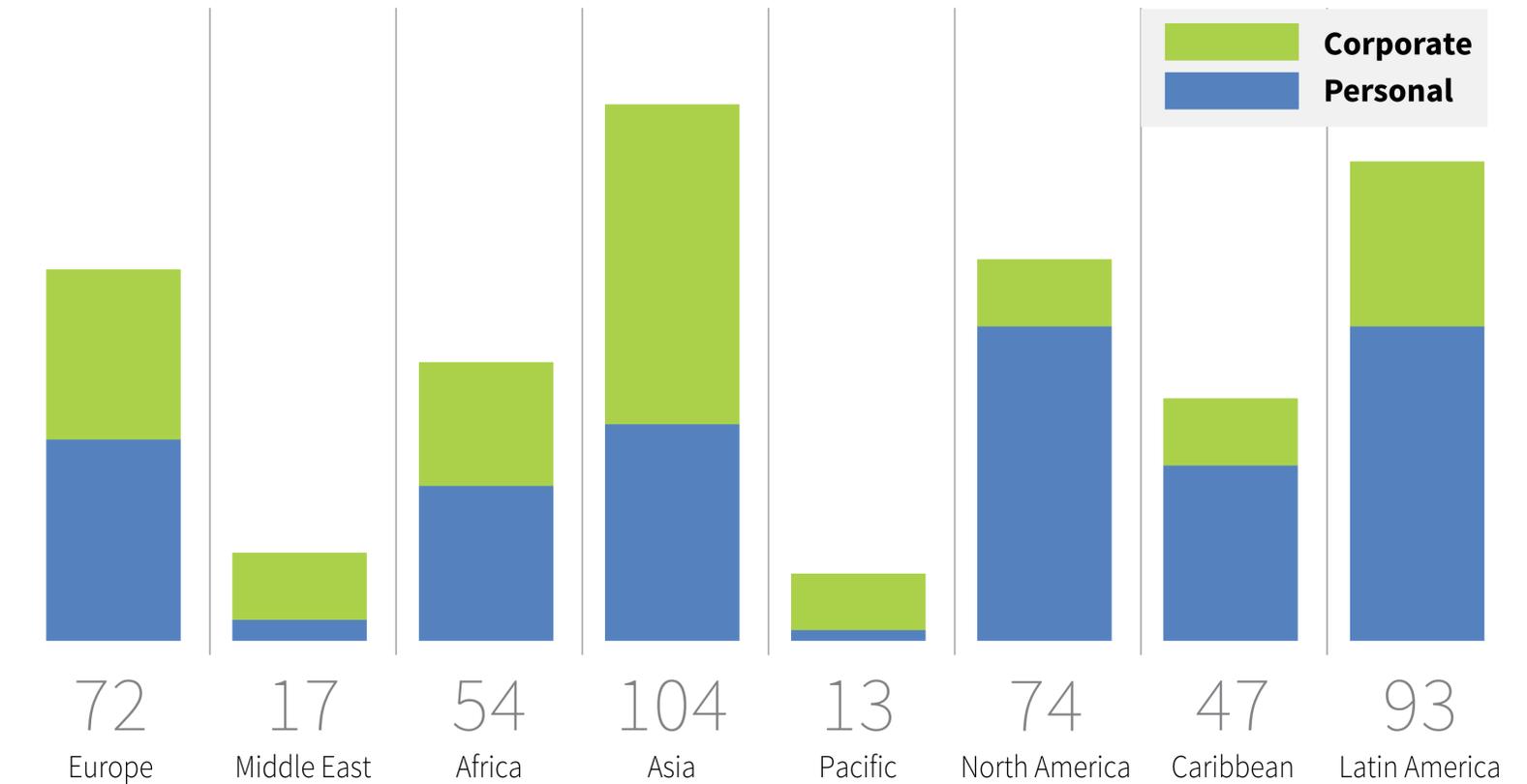


# Membership

WACC is a membership organization with members and partners in all 8 regions of the world. Please visit the [WACC membership page](#) for further information.

Region	Personal	Corporate	Total
Europe	39	33	72
Middle East	4	13	17
Africa	30	24	54
Asia	42	62	104
Pacific	2	11	13
North America	61	13	74
Caribbean	34	13	47
Latin America	61	32	93
<b>Total</b>	<b>273</b>	<b>201</b>	<b>474</b>

## WACC Members



# Funding Partners

In alphabetical order the current and most recent funding partners are:



The Anglican Communion, UK



Friedrich-Alexander University  
Erlangen-Nürnberg



Aqueduct Foundation  
(Many Voices, One World)



Many Voices, One World



Brot für die Welt, Germany



Pacific Media Assistance Scheme



UKaid Department for International  
Development



Brot für Alle, Switzerland



UNESCO-IPDC



Canada Summer Jobs



United Church of Canada



Evangelical Lutheran Church of  
Finland



UN Women



Evangelisches Missionswerk in  
Deutschland



Women's World Day of Prayer  
Germany

## Co-Funding Partners



AMARC



Global Fund for Women



Cultural Survival



Farm Radio International



Council for World Mission



Friedrich-Alexander-Universität  
Erlangen-Nürnberg

# WACC Organization

In 2017, WACC's governance structure was reviewed in consultation with members, directors, and lawyers. In 2018, changes to WACC's charitable objects, articles, and byelaws will be made to ensure that they comply with current charity and companies legislation. WACC is also working towards aligning governance and operational procedures between WACC UK and WACC Canada and to establish a governance and administrative structure that offers its members and partners both accountability and flexibility in terms of representation and participation.



Photo Credit: Paul Jeffrey/ACT Alliance

Stephen Deng works on his roof on April 14, 2017, in Poktap, a town in South Sudan's Jonglei State where conflict, drought and inflation have caused severe food insecurity. Deng and his family fled Poktap in 2013 when South Sudan's civil war broke out, and just returned in January 2017. The Lutheran World Federation, a member of the ACT Alliance, is helping families in the area tackle food problems, including with the provision of cash for the purchase of fishing line and hooks.

# WACC Staff 2017



**Karin Achtelstetter**  
General Secretary

## Programme



**Philip Lee**  
Deputy General Secretary,  
Editor of Media Development



**Lorenzo Vargas**  
Programme Manager - Community  
Radio



**Joseph Patterson**  
Financial Controller



**Sara Speicher**  
WACC UK Development Manager



**Gisèle Langendries**  
Administrator for Programmes and  
Funding



**Shushanik Nazaryan**  
Finance & Programmes Assistant



**Shari McMaster**  
Administrative Coordinator



**Sarah Macharia**  
Programme Manager - Gender and  
Communication Monitoring Rural  
Poverty Reporting

## Administration

## Consultants

**Saskia Rowley**      *Design Consultant*  
**Keith Nunn**        *IT Consultant*

## Interns and Volunteers

**Murtaza Bahrainwala**  
**Samanthe Huang**  
**Robert Gray**

The World Association for Christian Communication is registered in Canada as a not-for-profit corporation (438311-7) and an incorporated charitable organisation (number 83970 9524 RR0001) with its offices at 308 Main Street, Toronto ON, M4C 4X7. WACC is also a UK Registered Charity (number 296073) and a Company registered in England and Wales (number 2082273) with its Registered Office at 16 Tavistock Crescent, London W11 1AP, United Kingdom.

# Photo Credits/

FRONT COVER	Philip Lee.	"The World of Human Rights in Posters" by Paula Scher. "The outrage hand is always symbolic of protest and of hope. This montage was assembled from a collection of posters and messages from around the world representing all causes in the continual battle to overcome prejudice and injustice." From an exhibition at the Center for Civil and Human Rights, Atlanta, Georgia, USA
Page 2	Paul Jeffrey/ACT Alliance	Leglique Kenvenson looks out the window of a house in the Haitian community of Ganthier, where Mission Sociale des Eglises Hatiennes (MISSEH), a member of the ACT Alliance, helped this family and others in the village rebuild their homes and lives after the village was devastated in 2016 by Hurricane Matthew. Besides providing construction material for housing construction, MISSEH has also provided seeds and tools to farmers, while helping the community organize a more agile and responsive program of disaster risk reduction.
Page 3	Valter Hugo Muniz/ ACT for Peace	Pictures of the Human face of climate change stunt during the COP22
Page 4	Paul Jeffrey/ACT Alliance	Photo Credit: Paul Jeffrey/ACT Alliance A Rohingya girl, having just crossed the border from Myanmar, shows her new identity card that she was given by United Nations workers in the Kutupalong Refugee Camp near Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh, where members of the ACT Alliance provide humanitarian support for the refugees. More than 600,000 Rohingya have fled government-sanctioned violence in Myanmar for safety in Bangladesh.
Page 7	Paul Jeffrey/ACT Alliance	A primary school class in Panyagor, a town in South Sudan's Jonglei State, meets in a temporary shelter. The Lutheran World Federation, a member of the ACT Alliance, is helping families in the troubled region, which is torn by both war and drought, to educate their children, with a special focus on insuring that girls enter and remain in school. LWF is building new permanent classrooms as schools expand their services. South Sudan
Page 11	Joel Carillet/ACT Alliance	A 25-year-old Rohingya refugee woman stands with two children outside a shelter in the sprawling Kutupalong refugee camp in Bangladesh on October 29, 2017. Photo by Joel Carillet for the ACT Alliance.
Page 14	Paul Jeffrey/ACT Alliance	Children in Jean-Rabel in northwestern Haiti study in a temporary classroom while work continues on reconstructing an elementary school that was heavily damaged during Hurricane Matthew in 2016. Church World Service, a member of the ACT Alliance, is helping the community repair the school.
Page 21	Paul Jeffrey/ACT Alliance	Stephen Deng works on his roof on April 14, 2017, in Poktap, a town in South Sudan's Jonglei State where conflict, drought and inflation have caused severe food insecurity. Deng and his family fled Poktap in 2013 when South Sudan's civil war broke out, and just returned in January 2017. The Lutheran World Federation, a member of the ACT Alliance, is helping families in the area tackle food problems, including with the provision of cash for the purchase of fishing line and hooks.
Page 18	UN Photo/JC McIlwaine	International Women's Day celebration in South Sudan, held at Nyakuron Cultural Centre. The event, organized by the Ministry of Gender, Child, and Social Welfare, was held under the local theme "South Sudanese Pledge for Ending Child Marriage" and the global theme "Pledge for Parity", which calls for 50/50 gender parity by the year 2030.