

Funding policy of Women’s World Day of Prayer, German Committee

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1 Values and principles of the funding policy of WWDP Germany

According to Christian conviction, prayer and solidarity are inseparable. This is the foundation on which the Women's World Day of Prayer (WWDP), a global, ecumenical grassroots movement, has adopted its motto "Informed Prayer and Prayerful Action". The German Committee, Weltgebetstag der Frauen – Deutsches Komitee e.V. (WWDP Germany), and its member organizations are a part of a global ecumenical women's movement that is characterized by the spirit of mutual giving and receiving. Aware of unjust structures across the globe, we strive to treat each other with respect and empathy, stand up for each other, and share with each other in solidarity. The financial resources for this are made possible through the collection during the annual WWDP services, which are celebrated on the first Friday in March, as well as from donations from the supporters of our movement. We are aware of the special responsibility in handling the resources entrusted to us.

Our commitment is based on the belief that God created the world and all its creatures to live a peaceful, just, and good life (Genesis 1:1-2:4a). Every human being, regardless of religion, gender, ethnicity, or social status, is endowed with an inviolable dignity and the equal right to use a fair share of the riches of this Earth, in the firm belief that they are a gift from God. From this perspective, the "good life" of individuals, the community, future generations, and the whole of creation are inextricably linked: "If one member suffers, all suffer together" (1 Corinthians 12 26).

As Christians, we also hold true to our faith. We see the "option for the poor" as an on-going effort to look at our world from the perspective of disadvantaged people and to act from this point of view as followers of Jesus Christ. Throughout the world, women are often unable to fully enjoy their rights, and they suffer particularly from structural discrimination, exclusion, and violence. At the same time, they are key figures in their families and in society for ensuring a sustainable way of life. This is why WWDP Germany and the global women's movement primarily support initiatives and projects by women and girls regardless of their religion, nationality, and culture.

We want to act with transparency, respect, and reliability towards our project partners across the globe and the supporters of WWDP in Germany. In sisterly togetherness, we learn from each other and stand up for each other.

WWDP sees spiritual solidarity, commitment to gender equality, and global women's solidarity as inseparable tenets.

2 Objectives, focus areas, and strategies of funding policy

2.1 Objectives and strategies

The assertion and implementation of women's human rights is at the heart of our funding policy. This approach to women's rights takes into account the fact that structurally embedded human-rights violations against women are often not perceived as such. Our goal is achieving comprehensive gender equality that focuses on women's rights at the political, economic, social, and individual levels.

To ensure this is done, we support locally based women's organizations, initiatives, and associations that pursue such rights-based approaches and work at various levels (personal, institutional, and socio-political) to ensure women can experience empowerment and gender equality. Specifically, in this context, WWDP Germany seeks to expand the scope of its actions for women and girls with appropriate partnerships (see Section 2.3) and contribute to improving the general conditions for a gender-equal society. This goes hand in hand with the understanding that the strategies and measures to be taken must ideally be carried out simultaneously and in parallel, based on different levels of activity (personal, institutional, and socio-political).

2.2 Focus areas and funding priorities

The rights-based approach in the funding policy of WWDP Germany is derived from the values described in Section 1. Based on this, we identify six focus areas, each of which brings its own perspective to the table and serves to achieve a gender-equal society. All focus areas have one or more funding priorities that inform the specific project work.

2.2.1 The focus area "Right to peace", which stems from the right to live in a safe environment:

- The **funding priority "Peacebuilding and Peacekeeping"**, which includes the pursuit of peaceful coexistence, peaceful societies, and sustainable peace concepts.

2.2.2 The focus area "Right to a healthy environment"; this describes the right to an environment in which a dignified life is possible:

- The **funding priority "Food Sovereignty"**, i.e., people's sovereignty in matters regarding food and agriculture, with producers' control over production and marketing conditions.
- The **funding priority "Sustainable use of resources"**, i.e., the preservation of the natural regenerative capacity of resources within ecosystems, coupled with preserving biodiversity and adapting to the consequences of climate change.

2.2.3 The focus area "Social and political rights" in the sense of individual fundamental rights, e.g., to social stability, education, or any rights that enable participation in political action:

- The **funding priority "Equal Political and Social Participation"**, which encompasses both constituted and non-constituted decision-making at all levels, including effectively making any such decisions.
- The **funding priority "Education and Vocational Qualification"**, which includes both school-based, vocational, and non-formal education and qualification.

2.2.4 The focus area "Economic rights", which describes in particular the right to dignified work that secures one's livelihood:

- The **funding priority “Economic independence/livelihood”** refers to the equal participation of women in economic life in order to be financially independent and able to secure their own existence (and that of their family).

2.2.5 The focus area “Right to physical and mental integrity”, as a fundamental right to protection against injury to body, mind, and spirit:

- The **funding priority “Women’s health”**, i.e., unrestricted access to health services and the right to self-determination in all areas of sexuality and reproduction.
- The **funding priority “Combating violence against women and sexualized violence”**, which means the right of girls and women to physical and mental integrity.

2.2.6 The focus area “Women’s rights in churches and ecumenism” in the sense of equal rights in churches and equal access to all ministries:

- The **funding priority “Liberating Women’s Perspectives in Churches, Ecumenism, and Inter-faith Dialogue”** supports efforts to transcend patriarchal gender paradigms in matters of faith as well as reaching full equality of women in their religious communities.

2.3 Long-term partnerships as a strategic tool

In WWDP Germany’s working paper from 2012, fundamental changes to the modality of its funding were made: The financing of long-term programs with selected partner organizations,¹ sometimes over multi-year cycles, replaced the funding of individual projects. A prerequisite for such program funding has called for the respective partners to work competently and strategically on topics that are of particular importance for empowering women in their communities (see 2.2.). In this way, they are able to assert or expand their ability to act in the “*shrinking spaces*” (in the sense of restricting civil society engagement through repressive government action). Staying power (“partnerships with a long-term perspective”) is needed to enforce and implement women’s rights and concerns in the face of global challenges. At the same time, well-planned programs and partnerships often have to be adapted to changing conditions on short notice. The funding policy of WWDP Germany is therefore based on the following principles and convictions:

2.3.1 Starting point: Empowerment

- Empowerment, the expansion of women’s and girls’ freedom to act along with strengthening their competences is crucial for improving political, economic, and social conditions.
- Overcoming structural racism, post-colonial dependence, and discrimination based on gender, disability, age, religion, etc. is an inseparable part of personal and community empowerment.

2.3.2 Stakeholders at the local level: Women’s organizations

- The women and civil society groups organized locally know best about their own lives. From their perspective and with their skills, they can enforce women’s rights and improve the lives of women and girls in the long term.
- Strong, cross-regional women’s organizations as well as small initiatives and local women’s associations are important to demand and sustain rights and sustainable improvements in the lives of women and girls at the local level.

¹ We consider partner organizations to be women’s associations, women’s networks, or civil society organizations with which we share a common understanding of women’s empowerment.

2.3.3 Our contribution and approach

- Changing social conditions requires partners to implement medium- and long-term strategies, which we want to support within the scope of our partnerships. In practice, this funding is usually tied to “projects” as a financing instrument (e.g., due to applicable legal provisions at home and abroad).
- Working together as partners in this context also means that we maintain on-going dialog. This makes it possible to respond quickly to changing conditions and to adapt measures with flexibility.
- Institutional development, professionalizing subject matters, and strengthening our partner organizations are an important part of our partnership support.
- We examine every request, regardless of its origin, according to the aforementioned considerations. At the same time, we are aware that our resources are limited. This means we must join forces in certain areas and cannot provide the same level of support in all countries and regions.

2.4 Combining project and educational work

Many of the topics and priority areas of our partners are reflected in the WWDP services. They thus form important points of contact and learning for the educational and public relations work of WWDP Germany and strengthen its broad impact. The annually changing WWDP host countries offer an opportunity to show concrete starting points for “prayerful action” and thus to link solidarity with partners worldwide - at least selectively - with the leitmotif of the WWDP. This also applies to countries (especially in the Global North²) where women’s organizations are normally not eligible for funding given the fact that other funding opportunities are available.

As a spiritual ecumenical movement, WWDP Germany seeks to make a contribution to the global women’s movement with its funding policy. Conversely, the connection to our partner organizations is intended to strengthen the WWDP movement in its content-related debate (“informed prayer”) and thus to encourage a resolute commitment to women’s rights here and across the globe (“prayerful action”).

3 The funding policy of WWDP Germany in practice

The goals and strategies of the funding policy of WWDP Germany outlined in Section 2 can be effective if they are precisely tailored to the challenges and the options for action of the implementing organization. This section therefore specifies possible areas of work as well as the profile of the partner organizations and defines criteria that are intended to support a balanced distribution of funding in terms of content and geography. Finally, options for partner financing and key points for the design of approval procedures and funding cycles are listed.

3.1. Areas of work regarding the individual funding priorities

The partner organizations of WWDP Germany focus their work on one or more of the thematic areas listed below (hereinafter referred to as *funding priorities*, see Section 2.2):

² The term “Global South” describes regions of the world that were previously referred to as “developing countries” or “Third World” and is used to potentially avoid judgments. Countries in the Global South are socially, politically, and economically disadvantaged compared to those of the Global North (formerly referred to as “industrialized countries”). They were often exploited by colonialism or continue to be exploited by neocolonial structures to this day. Therefore, there are countries in the southern hemisphere that belong to the Global North (e.g., Australia) as well as countries in the northern hemisphere that are counted as part of the Global South (e.g., Albania).

3.1.1 Peacebuilding and peacekeeping

Promotion and support of:

- *civil conflict management*
- *meetings for dialog and exchange*
- *measures for the implementation of UN 1325 and UN 1820*³
- *feminist perspectives in foreign and security policy*
- *strengthening leadership/negotiation and dialog*
- *peace initiatives/movements/networks*
- *psychosocial support for women's rights/human rights defenders*

3.1.2 Sustainable use of resources and food sovereignty

Promotion and support of:

- *organic farming, livestock, and forestry*
- *protecting and restoring ecosystems*
- *subsistence and smallholder agriculture*
- *climate adaptation strategies*
- *women-empowering production and marketing mechanisms*
- *gender equality in agrarian reforms and access to/ownership of land*
- *alternative/renewable energies*
- *lobbying and advocacy*⁴

3.1.3 Political and social participation, education, and vocational training

Promotion and support of:

- *literacy/basic education*
- *political education and knowledge about women's rights*
- *civil society engagement, women's mandates, democratization*
- *self-organization, networking, and mentoring*
- *lobbying/advocacy/public relations*

3.1.4 Economic independence/livelihood

Promotion and support of:

- *entrepreneurial skills*
- *vocational education and training, informal education of women*
- *improvement of labor and social standards, protection of migrant workers*
- *retail trade/crafts/service sector*
- *women-empowering production and marketing mechanisms*

3.1.5 Combating violence against women and sexualized violence

Promotion and support of:

³ In 2000, the UN General Assembly adopted Resolution 1325 with its "Women, Peace, and Security" agenda, which called for special protection for women and girls in war zones and the strengthening of women's participation in political processes and institutions in the management and prevention of conflicts. It sees women as active stakeholders in peace-building processes in post-war societies. The follow-up Resolution 1820 of 2008 states that rape and other forms of sexual violence "may constitute a war crime, a crime against humanity, or an act constituting genocide."

⁴ Advocacy is an important area of work for civil society organizations and, in contrast to lobbying, in a broader sense encompasses processes in which the positions and interests of disadvantaged groups are communicated and reinforced by third parties. Often, this involves questions of power relations and unjust structures. Advocacy also differs from lobbying in that it strategically involves the general public. Lobbying in the narrow sense, on the other hand, focuses on influencing political decisions, primarily through direct work and dialog with political decision-makers.

- *eliminating/preventing FGM⁵ and harmful traditional practices*
- *combating trafficking in women/children and child marriage*
- *psychosocial work and trauma work*
- *legal advice/legal assistance*
- *sex education and reproductive health*
- *prevention/primary care*
- *lobbying and advocacy work*

3.1.6 Liberating Women's Perspectives in Churches, Ecumenism, and Interfaith Dialog

Promotion and support of:

- *feminist and liberation theologies*
- *ecumenical initiatives*
- *interfaith dialog and interfaith encounters*
- *women's rights in churches, e.g., through educational work on gender equality and empowerment*
- *networking, mentoring, and representation of women*
- *combating abuse in and around churches (e.g., sexualized violence, abuse of power, and spiritual abuse)*
- *"feminine", liberating and life-serving spirituality*

3.2 Regional and content-related priorities

WWDP Germany aligns the focus⁶ of its funding with the priorities of women (and women's organizations) from the Global South. In doing so, it attaches great importance to a balanced distribution of funding in Africa, Asia, Latin America, the Middle East, Oceania, and Central/Eastern Europe. In addition, WWDP Germany orients its efforts towards the topics of the partner organizations, which are urgent in the respective context and pivotal for achieving the goals laid out in Section 1. The approach, effectiveness, and long-term nature of the work of the partner organizations, taking into account local political, social, economic, and environmental challenges and developments, play a decisive role. An exception to the regional and content-related priorities are the annually changing WWDP host countries, in which partnerships are initiated for a certain period of time. The projects borne out of these cooperations are found within the context of the respective order of worship.

3.3 Partner organizations

3.3.1 Establishing and developing cooperations

WWDP Germany's project partnerships have developed over the course of six decades through personal contacts between women from WWDP and groups and associations in the Global South, through contacts with other WWDP committees, and through word-of-mouth advertising on site. Over the past two decades, project funding that was initially intended to be one-off has also developed into long-term cooperations, which have led to a more intensive exchange of content and medium- to long-term funding prospects for women's organizations.

This has been particularly true since 2012, when a funding policy was implemented for the first time. It saw a selection of project partnerships along focus areas for women's empowerment (so-called

⁵ FGM stands for "female genital mutilation"

⁶ The revision of the previous funding policy showed that the focus on funding based on selected partner countries and the differentiation of project promoters into "grassroots organizations" and "core partners" were not expedient for this purpose and have therefore been abandoned.

“funding priorities”). As a result, “project partners” gradually became “partner organizations” in order to achieve structural change in favor of their target groups.

This approach will be pursued even more consistently in the revised funding policy. In concrete terms, this means that the requests of interested organizations coupled with the proactive approach of suitable local partners by WWDP Germany itself are taken into account when selecting the range of partners. Regardless of the manner in which the first contact was made, the regular application process must still be adhered to. A specific cooperation, which can foresee funding in the medium term, is structured based on the financing of successive project applications.

3.3.2 The range of partners of WWDP Germany

WWDP Germany works exclusively with civil-society stakeholders. In doing so, it strives for a range of partners in which local grassroots organizations are represented in addition to medium-sized and large organizations with a regional and/or (inter-)national reach. They share the socio-political goals of WWDP Germany and are ideally parts of well-organized networks with local social movements.

Consequently, the decisive selection criterion is the organizations’ approach based on women’s rights when designing their main topics and working methods. For example, the partners’ previous experience in terms of content, local, and technical expertise; institutional reliability and implementation capacity; experience in the management of external funds etc. play a decisive role. Another criterion is the selection of target groups, with priority given to women and girls who are discriminated against and who are at risk.⁷

WWDP Germany is particularly interested in strengthening its range of partners who are open to ecumenical and interfaith exchange. However, the deciding factor for cooperation is not whether the partner organization is directly connected to church or religious institutions but rather their values are consistent with the overarching orientation of the funding policy of WWDP Germany.

3.3.3 Strategic support for partner organizations

The cooperation with the partner organizations is based on the principle of individual and social self-empowerment of girls and women. Thus, the focus is on working for the benefit of these target groups as well as on expanding their competencies and institutionally strengthening their organizations.

In terms of implementation, this means an intensive exchange with the partner organizations on conceptual and strategic questions of cooperation is sought which goes beyond the discussion of specific project plans. This goes hand in hand with the promotion of networking and exchange of experiences between partner organizations from the Global South (“South-South knowledge transfer”).

3.4 Partner funding and application process

3.4.1 Allocation of funds for project work

With the adoption of the budget for the subsequent year, the committee determines the budget for the project funds. At least 60% of the sum of the previous year’s collection and donations must be used for partner support.⁸

⁷ See Section 1

⁸ A further share is used for other statutory tasks (educational work, preparation of materials, etc.).

3.4.2 Financial instruments for partner organizations

There are three options available for funding within the scope of a regular funding cycle: the standard application, an abbreviated standard application, or a framework agreement.

The *standard application* follows the guidelines laid down for the application cycle (see Section 3.5.1). The funding period is a maximum of three years, with a maximum funding volume of 40,000 euros per year. For partner organizations with a funding requirement of no more than 10,000 euros, there is also the possibility of a simplified application by means of an abbreviated application form (= *abbreviated standard application*).

In addition, a *framework agreement* can be concluded with selected partner organizations in order to cooperate in a thematically relevant area over the medium term. The maximum duration of such an agreement is four years, and the maximum amount of financing is limited to 120,000 euros over the entire term. The framework agreement provides partner organizations with financial security over a longer period of time and requires preparation beyond the standard application (see Section 3.5.1).

Beyond the regular funding cycle, there is the option of receiving a funding commitment by *board resolution*, also by written consent in lieu of a meeting. The maximum amount of funding for this is set out in the rules of procedure of WWDP Germany.

Partner organizations can be funded either through a standard application, an abbreviated standard application, or a framework agreement. In justified cases, a board resolution can be applied for in parallel with ongoing funding.

3.5 Application and approval procedure

3.5.1 Application procedure

All application procedures mentioned in Section 3.4.2 follow a two-step process: Organizations interested in funding first go through a so-called “sponsor examination”. The main focus is on the organization’s purpose laid out in the statutes; the orientation of the content, guidelines, priorities, and concepts; as well as its organizational, personnel, and financial capacities. If its profile is compatible with the principles and content of WWDP Germany, it will be invited in a second step to enter into discussions with the project department regarding the envisaged areas of cooperation. This includes, among other things, defining the specific content of the projects and the agreement on the amount of the financial contribution of WWDP Germany. After this phase of getting to know each other and the preliminary discussions of the content, a project application is submitted according to the application forms, usually by 1 July of each year. The application will then be reviewed in the project department and, after a positive evaluation, will be submitted to the delegates for approval at a regular committee meeting.

Motions outside of the regular application cycle that are decided by the board can be submitted to any board meeting. An informal project application, which is submitted to the board in the form of a proposal for approval, is sufficient.

3.5.2 Approval procedure

As a rule, standard proposals or abbreviated standard proposals are approved at the regular committee meetings at the end of a given year. An application is approved if it receives a simple majority of the votes of the delegates present.

In exceptional cases (e.g., adherence to deadlines in the case of co-financing, objective reasons for an earlier start of the project), approval by the committee members is possible at any time in the electronic written consent in lieu of a meeting within a period of one week. This means an application is

considered approved – similar to the approval at a committee meeting – if it receives a relative majority of responses. Responses not received count as abstentions.

Exceptions to this are the framework agreements, which are only approved in regular committee meetings, as well as the project-related board resolutions, which can be presented at any board meeting. These applications are deemed to have been approved if a majority of the board members vote in favor of them.

3.6 Special cases and eligibility for funding

3.6.1 Eligibility criteria for project funding

Individuals, companies, conferences, and local work in Germany

WWDP Germany does not provide funding to individuals. Welfare measures without a clearly recognizable orientation towards women's empowerment are also excluded from funding.

Participation in conferences (including travel expenses) as a one-off measure cannot be funded.

Companies without a focus on the common good cannot become cooperation partners of WWDP Germany. WWDP Germany does not finance any project measures in Germany.

Emergency/disaster relief and reconstruction

WWDP Germany does not provide emergency and disaster relief because it does not have sufficient technical or logistical capacities in this area. No funds are transferred from WWDP Germany to emergency aid organizations. In justified cases, WWDP Germany can be involved in reconstruction phases, insofar as the orientation towards the funding priorities in the medium-term objective is recognizable on site.

3.6.2 Special cases

Joint financing with other WWDP committees ("DACH projects"⁹)

WWDP Germany finances projects of other WWDP committees on a pro rata basis or receives funds from them in order to support partner organizations abroad. This creates synergies on site as well as among all committees involved. This type of funding is typical, but not exclusive to, projects in current and future WWDP countries. The financing modalities of the project-related DACH cooperations are the responsibility of the project department and are approved by the committee.

International World Day of Prayer Work

WWDP Germany may decide to support the work of committees in other countries. The funds for this are allocated by the WWDP's international office in New York according to specially developed criteria. This support is not part of the present funding policy.

Maximilian-Kolbe-Werk

WWDP Germany is committed to the Maximilian-Kolbe-Werk, a relief organization based in Freiburg that focuses on the survivors of Nazi concentration camps and ghettos, and offers it a fixed annual grant in appreciation for its work. The funds for this funding do not come from the project budget but from the regular budget of WWDP Germany. Since 2016, the modalities have been regulated by a separate cooperation agreement between WWDP Germany and the Maximilian-Kolbe-Werk.

⁹ In this context, DACH stands for the joint support of partner organizations by the WWDP committees from Germany (D), Austria (A), and Switzerland (CH).