



## Capacity Statement

# CIVIL SOCIETY & AGENCY COLLABORATION



Cooperation with civil society has been on the agenda of international cooperation and humanitarian organisations, to differing degrees, for the past decades. Since its foundation in 1962 Welthungerhilfe cooperates with civil society organizations.

Welthungerhilfe's vision is a world in which all people can exercise their right to lead a self-determined life in dignity and justice, and free from hunger and poverty. Vibrant and diverse civil societies are central to upholding and defending human rights and to contributing to poverty reduction from the bottom-up at different levels. But according to CIVICUS (2020) only three per cent of the world's population are currently living in countries where the core civic freedoms of association, peaceful assembly and expression are widely respected, even though those civil rights and liberties are proven to be essential to the health and vitality of societies. Social change and sustainable development require civic participation and meaningful, effective cooperation of stakeholders at all levels. In this process, Welthungerhilfe acts as promoter and facilitator.

Civil society is one of the core forces that drive socio-political change by tackling root causes of hunger and poverty. In consultation and cooperation with local civil society partners, Welthungerhilfe has increasingly taken on the role as facilitator of peer-to-peer information sharing and learning and as a promoter of South-to-

South exchange. Civil Society Actors provide basic services to fulfil partially or to substitute temporarily governments obligations, whenever and wherever government cannot live up to these (such as the distribution of cash cards in refugee contexts). In development contexts Civil Society Partners hold government institutions to account and promote transparency and accountability.

The Core Humanitarian Standard is central to Welthungerhilfe's work and our collaboration with national civil society partners.

Cooperation at eye level, learning from and with Southern partners, as well as joint programme development and improving quality of implementation are essential for us, while focussing on complementary strengths.

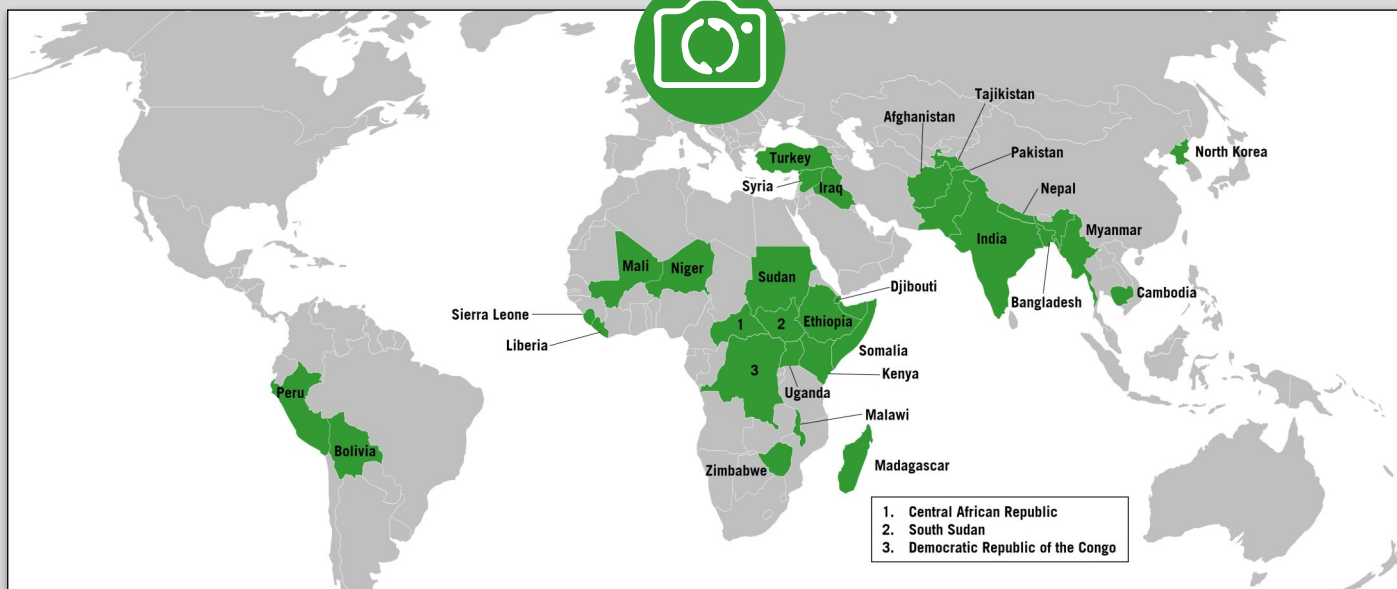
## Welthungerhilfe Sector Figures

In 2021, Welthungerhilfe implemented 85 projects with components to promote Civil Society (27% out of 313 projects). 48.8 million euros were invested. A total of 700,000 people were directly reached through these projects. We assume that more than 10 million people benefit indirectly through strengthening of civil society structures. The projects are generally multi-sectoral: measures often take place in two other sectors in addition to Civil Society activities. These projects last 3.6 years on average. Around 50% of all Welthungerhilfe projects are implemented fully (30%) or partially (20%) through local and national Civil Society partner organizations.

Overview of Welthungerhilfe supported interventions focusing on strengthening civil society:

### Welthungerhilfe Civil Society projects under implementation (status 05/2021)

No. of interventions that explicitly and predominantly aim at strengthening civil society	21
Total budget volume	20 Mio. EUR
Average project volume	950.000 EUR
Average project duration	44 months
Gender ratio share of women	48,8%
Average costs per direct beneficiary	262,21 EUR



One crucial component for us are needs-oriented capacity development measures with Civil Society Organisations. The skills to be enhanced are identified through dialogue, mutual commitment and prior consent, at every stage of cooperation. Partnership agreements are applied for formalising cooperation, as well as for agreeing on roles and responsibilities and the allocation of funds. To strengthen and empower Civil Society Actors in their roles as independent agents of change, four main approaches are applied by Welthungerhilfe in emergency, rehabilitation and development contexts:

- Providing support to local civil society partners and grassroots organisations to create awareness and influence decision making
- Support to create awareness and influence decision making
- Joint learning and exchange with civil society partners

- Capacity Strengthening of national Civil Society Organisations and implementation of projects
- Meaningful participation through inclusive participation, for most marginalized groups and communities including mother, farmer and water user groups, irrigation committees and disaster risk management committees

### Welthungerhilfe's Civil Society Strategy Statement

Civil Society Actors enable change and are crucial players when it comes to addressing inequalities and fostering sustainable development.

We support these agencies to use and extend their political space and foster their activities towards basic human rights like the right to food and water.

We contribute to civil society empowerment in all countries, taking the different realities and existing opportunities into account.

## Thematic Principles

Welthungerhilfe supports civil society actors in their roles as agents of change. Broad partnership experiences are practiced including capacity development, promotion of networking, right to food and land rights aspects. Together with local civil society partner organizations, Welthungerhilfe is working towards strengthening transparent and accountable structures from the bottom up, ensuring success of the programme and project work in the long-term.

In development, rehabilitation and emergency contexts the collaboration focuses on the following aspects:

- Strong collaborative partnerships with civil society organisations in a country are key to the success of our work. Welthungerhilfe self-implements projects only in exceptional circumstances.
- Collaboration encompasses various forms of Civil Society Organisations and is not limited to registered NGOs. Civil society actors could be community-based organizations, local, networks, federations etc.
- Welthungerhilfe acts as a facilitator and enabler rather than an implementing agent. We promote mutual learning. In our work we strive for sustainability, local ownership and impact.
- Welthungerhilfe applies a rights-based-approach as a basic principle strengthening capacities of rights holders to hold duty bearers accountable
- Welthungerhilfe strengthens meaningful participation through inclusive participatory processes, in particular for most marginalized groups and communities
- For us, strengthening civil society constitutes a key lever to support societal change, towards the progressive realization of the Human Right to adequate Food.
- In most regions where we work, a staff member is designated to strengthen the partnerships with civil society organisations. In half of the countries, we have personnel who are exclusively dedicated to relations with civil society actors (status 2021). In countries where 100% of projects are implemented with local civil society partners, almost all Welthungerhilfe staff members contribute to some degree to supporting civil society actors.

## Institutional Capacities

Civil Society Engagement sector support for country programmes is mainly provided by two units: Sector Strategy, Knowledge & Learning and Policy and External Relations, based at Welthungerhilfe's HQ, in Bonn, Germany. The units support on request:

- development of standards, and guidelines,
- advisory services regarding grant applications, internal consultation and professional back stopping,
- strengthening of civil-society actors in multi-country advocacy-programs such as 'Rural Governance for the Right to Food' and [Land for Life](#)
- facilitating of regular exchange, reflection and learning
- promoting and supporting on the job mentoring and coaching
- knowledge exchange and internal networking, and
- external networking and advocacy.

Welthungerhilfe Country and field offices also play a crucial role in process facilitation. They directly support partner organizations through e.g. on-the-job trainings, peer to peer exchange, networking facilitation, mentoring, training on technical topics such as food nutrition security etc.

All Welthungerhilfe program countries take part in an internal Civil Society Network, where information is exchanged frequently, and digital exchange sessions take place on prioritized topics.

In about half of Welthungerhilfe programme countries, partner advisors provide in-country support to Welthungerhilfe's country teams and partners. Our Country office teams support the operations in the fields of Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability & Learning, technical topics such as agriculture, nutrition, WASH, logistics, finance administration and security.

Capacity development is supported on all levels for the partner organisations and Welthungerhilfe staff. One important institution is here the [Civil Society Academy](#).

## Future challenges/upcoming topics

We work in contexts where people are most affected by hunger and poverty. Collaboration with humanitarian and development partners, with national NGOs, CSOs, CBOs and their networks remain crucial.

The 'Grand Bargain' initiative and especially the 'Charter for Change' comprises of principles to design humanitarian assistance interventions as local as possible and as direct as possible. We recommit to the 'Localization Agenda' supporting first responders in humanitarian aid and to invest in local, national and regional leadership, capacity strengthening and response systems. One crucial move forward is the ToGether program with 40 local humanitarian partners (LHP) and four international consortium partners in eight countries financed by German Federal Foreign Office (2020 – 2023). Here integration of the local partners is the basis to take responsibilities and actions in the humanitarian system of their countries for a principled humanitarian assistance.

The continuously shrinking space for civil society actors is a fundamental challenge for our activities and that of our partners now and in the coming years. More and more countries have passed laws limiting the space of civil society actors in particular with regard to political engagement. Some countries introduce burdensome administrative processes such as approval of every single activity by a government agency, which is expensive for organisations, paralyzes them and prevents independent work. Therefore, Welthungerhilfe together with the Civil Society Partners, keeps close engagement and coordination with these structures and supports where possible in order to strengthen their role and accountability to their constituencies. In such cases, Civil Society Actors play a crucial watch dog role.

## Publications / Links

### [Position paper on Promotion of Civil Society in partner countries](#) (EN, FR, SP):

This paper formulates Welthungerhilfe's position and policy with regard to its co-operation with civil society groups in the partner countries and describes challenges.

### [Orientation Framework Civil Society – a valuable partnership, part I:](#)

With the Orientation Framework Welthungerhilfe introduces quality standards and good Civil Society Cooperation practices for all Welthungerhilfe staff and civil society partners in the project countries.

### [Orientation Framework Civil Society – a valuable partnership, part II:](#)

The digital publication is divided in three main chapters, mainly fed by the country offices: [best country practices](#), [tools](#) and [country experiences](#). Country practices and tools focus on the support of the civil society cooperation practitioners seeking guidance and reference materials to understand and apply systems strengthening approaches.

### [Orientation Framework on Rights Based Approaches, part I:](#)

The document was prepared to develop a common understanding on how we can apply a rights-based approach in our program work and to provide a basis for debate and discussion.

### [Orientation Framework on Rights Based Approaches, part II:](#)

The office 365 Wiki page includes a comprehensive set of tools, instruments and guiding questions including a step-by-step description on a rights-based situation analysis and summaries of different project approaches that provide practical examples.

Best practices about [“Strengthening Advocacy of NGOs in the Global South”](#) (Welthungerhilfe for VENRO, 2020): [NRO-Report 2021: Wir mischen uns ein \(venro.org\)](#) (DE), [examples link](#) (EN).

### [Manual on Indicators related to Cooperation with Civil Society](#) (EN, FR):

The document is a practical guide for project planners and managers, to facilitate the understanding on how to operationalise the concept of cooperation with civil society' throughout the whole project cycle including concrete indicator formulations.

### [Land for Life:](#)

Through this initiative Welthungerhilfe, in partnership with civil society partners in four African countries, promotes the establishment or contributes to strengthening existing multi-actor partnership on land governance and responsible agricultural investments.

### [Social accountability Toolbox:](#)

This toolbox has been developed by [Civil Society Academy](#), Welthungerhilfe and partners in the context of the program 'Strengthening Local Governance for the Right to Food'.

With this initiative, Welthungerhilfe aims to strengthen the capacities of civil society partners and rural communities in three African countries and India to engage in political decision-making processes and hold their governments accountable on realizing the right to adequate food.

## Partnerships / Networks

Welthungerhilfe is part of many networks to further strengthen its own organizational capacities, to provide opportunities for civil society partners to grow further and to jointly advocate for change through thematic alliances.

Welthungerhilfe...

... is a member of



**CHS Alliance**  
committed to the Core Humanitarian Standard on Quality and Accountability  
<https://corehumanitarianstandard.org/>

... follows the

Localisation Agenda of the  
**Charter 4 CHANGE**  
<https://charter4change.org/>

... supports



**CIVIL SOCIETY ACADEMY**  
the training initiative  
<https://www.civilsocietyacademy.org/>

... influences policy making in the framework of



**INTERNATIONAL LAND COALITION**  
<https://www.landcoalition.org/en/>  
<http://www.csm4cfs.org/the-cfs/>



**START NETWORK**  
A new era of humanitarian action  
<https://startnetwork.org/>

.... is also member of



**European humanitarian NGOs.**  
Standing together.  
<https://voiceeu.org/>

... works on a human-rights based multi-actor approach.



**LAND FOR LIFE**  
Dialogue for Change  
<http://www.land-for-life.org/>



**Alliance 2015**  
towards the eradication of poverty



**VENRO**  
ASSOCIATION OF GERMAN DEVELOPMENT AND HUMANITARIAN AID NGOs  
<https://www.venro.org/start>



**CONCORD**  
<https://concordeurope.org/>

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