

Who We Are and What We Believe

World Connect supports innovative ideas and local solutions for the challenges facing communities, especially women and children in under-resourced areas worldwide. We recognize that the necessary expertise, ingenuity, and sustained commitment to solving development challenges lies in the knowledge, talents, and leadership of locals, both individuals and groups. We see our role as partners and promoters, working with communities to strengthen their ideas and bring their leadership to the forefront.

Our on-the-ground work typically begins with Established Field Partners, who have deep knowledge and understanding of particular communities and community dynamics, and are uniquely positioned to facilitate participatory engagement to identify and champion local leaders and ideas. World Connect provides customized tools and guidance to inform collaboration and project design, seed funding to get projects off the ground, and ongoing coaching and support throughout project implementation, monitoring and evaluation.

While World Connect projects are community-driven and multi-sectoral, the majority we have supported are addressing the health, education, environmental, and economic issues that are articulated and prioritized by local communities themselves, and emphasize outcomes for women and girls. We have launched 1,200+ projects in 42+ countries. Visit our [Discover Projects](#) page to see examples, or read on to learn more about opportunities for your community.

Glossary of Key Development Actors in World Connect Projects

Project Team: World Connect's model requires three key actors, the Local Leader and Established Field Partner, as well as a local Community Organization. All three are expected to play an active role throughout the project's lifespan; that is the project design, implementation, and monitoring. It is important that these three key actors represent a diverse affiliation to the proposed project and community, to ensure a well-rounded and represented team who can offer varied perspectives, can work together proactively through challenges, and can ensure the community sees checks and balances in the project management. These roles are defined further below:

Community Organization: We define Community Organization broadly as a local committee, association, cooperative or group, formal or informal, based in or working deeply in the primary project site. We prioritize partnerships with women-led, grassroots organizations, though we work with many types of organizations with

many diverse forms of leadership. What is most important is the depth of the Community Organization's relationship to the community, and its ability to be a widely trusted voice and convener in the community for this project.

Local Leader: The Local Leader must be a country national who was born in, is living in, or is otherwise deeply familiar with the primary project site. The Local Leader should be someone who is trusted and credible in the partner community, because she or he will be responsible for leading the project side-by-side with, or even out front of, the Established Field Partner. The Local Leader should not be an employee of or working at the direction of the Established Field Partner. We prioritize working with women as Local Leaders, though it is not required. We also encourage the consideration of individuals from marginalized groups for the role of Local Leader, such as persons living with disability, ethnic or religious minorities, LGBTQ+ community members, or people who are otherwise stigmatized or excluded locally. The role of a Local Leader is expected to be voluntary and for the benefit of the project and wider community, not for her or his own financial self-interest.

Established Field Partner: The role of the Established Field Partner is to identify and support trusted and credible local development actors, to share skills and experiences, to organize and deliver trainings, and to be a bridge for communication and reporting between the community and World Connect. We encourage Established Field Partners to see their role as an opportunity to champion and amplify the leadership and voices of women in the community and other marginalized groups, such as persons living with disability, ethnic or religious minorities, LGBTQ+ community members, or people who are otherwise stigmatized or excluded locally. The Established Field Partner will lead alongside a Local Leader, facilitating inclusive decision-making and participation in the community. The role of an Established Field Partner is expected to be voluntary and for the benefit of the project and wider community, not for her or his own financial self-interest.

Application Requirements

Collaboration & Inclusion

Our expectation is for Established Field Partners to collaborate with a Community Organization and a Local Leader as partners in designing the project and completing the grant application. The project design should be well-informed by the voices of those who it is intended to benefit, especially women and local marginalized populations. It is important that the project idea and design come from the community.

Community Contribution Requirement

A detailed budget must be submitted as part of the application and should include a

minimum 25% community contribution, of which 10% is a community cash contribution. The remaining 15% can be a combination of cash and/or in-kind contributions from the community. For example, a \$5,000 project requires at least \$500 of community cash contribution and at least \$750 of community in-kind or additional cash contributions. In-kind contributions can include materials or services donated by the community outside of the cost of the grant.

We partner with communities working toward goals aligned with one or more of our organization's focus areas: education, health, economic opportunity, and the environment.

We are not able to support:

- Organizations with a goal of evangelism or religious conversion.
- Organizations that discriminate on the basis of race, ethnicity, religion, gender, gender identity, disability, or sexual orientation.

The International Grants Program

International Grants Program applications are considered for project teams requesting up to \$5,000 USD.

We invite International Grants Program applications from Established Field Partners affiliated with the following Established Field Partner Networks:

- Peace Corps Volunteers
- Returned Peace Corps Volunteers
- CorpsAfrica Volunteers
- Volunteer Service Overseas (VSO) Volunteers
- YALI Mandela Washington Fellows
- YALI Regional Leadership Center (RLC) Alumni
- Global Health Corps Volunteers
- Haitian Education and Leadership Program (HELP) Alumni
- LEAP Africa Volunteers
- Teach for All Network Fellows
- Young Leaders of the Americas (YLAI) Alumni
- Flame Tree Initiative Volunteers

Accelerator Grants

Accelerator Grants have a maximum grant amount of \$750 USD. Accelerator Grants are specifically for potential partners who are not associated with one of the Established Field Partner Networks listed above. At present, we are only accepting

applications for Accelerator Grants in Malawi, Kenya, and Rwanda.

We invite Accelerator Grants applications for the following types of projects:

- Growing the reach and revenues of women-led businesses and cooperatives
- Providing seed capital for community-based, environmental enterprise
- Supporting livelihoods (income-generating) projects for community health workers
- Promoting sustainable schoolyards: gardening, nutrition, composting, recycling, education

If the above outlined criteria match your community and goals, we invite you to our [screening process](#).

Our expectation is for Established Field Partners to collaborate with a Community Organization and a Local Leader as partners in designing the project and completing the grant application. The project design should be well-informed by the voices of those who it is intended to benefit, especially women and local marginalized populations.

COVID-19 Guidelines

We encourage all of our Established Field Partners to abide by [guidance from the World Health Organization](#) and mandates from national and local governments for preventing the spread of COVID-19. As leaders on your projects, we rely on you to share this information and model the necessary safety precautions to ensure project participants and participating communities remain safe.

World Connect's model requires deep engagement* with participating communities and stakeholders to plan and design projects. Due to COVID-19, World Connect cautions Established Field Partners who do not already reside in the participating community(ies) to travel into communities only if it aligns with national COVID-19 regulations.

Established Field Partners who are unable to travel to participating community(ies) can choose to utilize available and accessible communication technology (phone, SMS, WhatsApp, email, etc.) to communicate with community stakeholders**. To support you in these efforts, there is an [offline version of our grant application available for download at this link](#).

*This process requires input from community leaders, relevant community

stakeholders, women, adolescent girls, people living with disabilities, and other vulnerable groups in prioritizing, designing, planning, and implementing the project.

**It is important for the Established Field Partner and Local Leader to consider how those without access to technology can meaningfully participate in the project design.