



## Giving Tuesday 2023 WPDI Newsletter





# Foreword by Executive Director

Caroline Descombris

So far, 2023 has been an enriching year for WPD, especially for our dedicated teams around the world and for our inspiring Youth Peacemakers. They are more dedicated than ever to leading the socio-economic transformation of communities that have, in many cases, experienced terrible hardship.

Witnessing the wonderful social shift and individual empowerment our programs precipitate in the communities, where we have been operating for over 10 years, is a source of real satisfaction. Above all, it motivates us to better ourselves in the service of these communities and to improve our action on the ground..

Recently, the growth of our programs in scope and diversity has led us to rethink how we deploy our strategy in order to highlight emerging trends in the development of our programs. In contextualizing our programs under the four pillars of Peacebuilding, Livelihoods, Health and Wellbeing, and Sports, we have real hope that we will be more effective in generating innovation on the ground and in communicating our results to our partners and the public.

Indeed, we believe that, for an organization like our own, being effective means that we need to both deliver results on the ground and ensure that everyone understands the ideas behind our action, including for raising resources. Even the smallest donation can go a long way to helping the poorest communities, changing the lives of people who have known a world of violence, who have never been connected to our globalized society, and many of whom are still reeling from the unimaginably traumatic experiences they have had to endure.

I hope you will join me and my team in continuing this positive action, because together, we can really make a difference.

Thank you,

Caroline Descombris



“It warms my heart to see the successes of our programs around the world, but I remain grounded. I am always motivated to go even further. I firmly believe that our approach can make all the difference, and call on everyone to help us achieve peace in places where it is desperately needed.”

WPD CEO and Founder  
**Forest Whitaker**

“We know that peace is an essential part of development, so we are delighted that our players are supporting Whitaker Peace & Development Initiative. Their holistic approach to peace and development, with a particular focus on young people and women, helps those affected by conflict transform into safer and more prosperous communities.”

Head of Charities, People's Postcode Lottery  
**Laura Chow**





# Peacebuilding

In countries where violence and instability have been the norm for many years, basic social institutions that most of us take for granted are often lacking.

Peacebuilding is WPDl's strategy to maintain conditions of peace in the daily lives of the underprivileged communities where we operate, through educational and vocational initiatives that help local people learn the skills and knowledge required to resolve conflict in a peaceful manner. These include Conflict Resolution Education programs in schools and at our Community Learning Centers, Community Dialogue sessions, Community Leaders training and advocacy campaigns. The skills taught in the framework of these programs are essential if communities are to create conditions for lasting, sustainable peace.

## Key Figures

1,855 Youth Peacemakers  
trained by WPDl

30,837 students trained in  
Conflict Resolution in 2022

268 schools host our Peace  
Education program

174,138 participants in  
our peacebuilding events in 2022

## Testimonials

“ I am now actively working at developing my own brand of organic skincare and makeup. I will be using the tools I have been given by WPDl and I will pursue my dream of becoming an entrepreneur. I am happy that we will go back to the community next year, and I am particularly excited about the bootcamp opportunities. One of my greatest points of pride has been to keep being part of WPDl in Tijuana.”

*Erika Alzate WPDl Youth Peacemaker, Mexico*

“ The peace meeting held today among the Districts of Napak, Nabilatuk and Moroto will bring sustainable peace and development as well stability among Karimojong communities, because everybody was really touched by the dangerous escalating insecurity in the region. My appreciation goes to Whitaker Peace & Development Initiative for supporting such important dialogue meetings and bringing the three district together to make peace.”

*Pulkol Paul Local council one, Naoi village, Lorengedwat Sub-County Nabilatuk district of Uganda*

## Support our Peacebuilding program

**\$50**

Supplies to create a  
peace club in a school

[Donate](#)

**\$200**

1 year school fees  
for a pupil

[Donate](#)

**\$3,000**

Training of a Youth  
Peacemaker for one year

[Donate](#)





# Livelihood

**Our Livelihood pillar is focused on vocational training. The idea is to create a local process of economic development led by local people, with a particular focus on empowering youths and women.**

In the framework of our Livelihood global strategy, we provide training programs in Business and Entrepreneurship, ICT and Arts & Crafts. The Business Bootcamp, (which) is the main program of this pillar, is a business incubation platform designed to promote local entrepreneurship and provide vocational trainings for marginalized communities geared towards financial independence. Supporting small businesses designed and run by young people, women and members of the local community as a whole is a key element of our work.

## Key Figures

**637** business are currently supported through our business programs

**243** of those business supported were created in 2023

**12,999** people received vocational training in 2022

**992** women participated in our Women Livelihood Program this year

## Testimonials

“

Extend my gratitude to WPD for this strategic livelihood program that has been made available. With the theoretical business training we had, personally, I am now able and more equipped to understand the fundamental principles of a business. I can now apply my skills and knowledge to best run the business that me and my partner are launching. I am humbled for being one of the business plan winners, thank you WPD and L'ORÉAL for bringing change now I can make a change in my community.”

*Graduate of Women Livelihood Program, Cape Town, South Africa*

“

By winning this competition with WPD, we are able to acquire machinery and equipment to provide a more complete service such as printing, sublimation and 3D printing to be a professional provider. Being migrants and fleeing from our hostile situation in Colombia, we feel welcomed and included, and now we now have a chance to have a good life. WPD has been life-changing for us and we are deeply grateful. With the training they provided, we feel much more prepared to take anything that we may face. Thank you so much for this opportunity.”

*Vivian Abril, Owner of NAVIGRAF, Printing Service, Tijuana, Mexico*

## Support the Livelihood program

**\$200**

Supplies for training of vulnerable women in business

Donate

**\$1,000**

Supports expansion of promising businesses

Donate

**\$3,000**

Start up capital for youth or women-led business

Donate





# Health and Wellbeing

Many of the communities we operate in have suffered years of conflict, instability and a total lack of supportive infrastructure.

People in these communities have often experienced various forms of trauma, and are in need of support. This is why health and wellbeing has been elevated as an essential pillar of WPDI's mandate. In the framework of this pillar, we set up and develop trauma healing initiatives, mental health training programs, and informative programs on health, notably sexual and reproductive health, in the marginalized communities where we operate in order to help vulnerable people heal and find peace.

## Key Figures

3,537 people benefited from our Trauma Healing Services in 2022

2,156 people benefited from our Sexual and Reproductive Health Services in 2023 so far



## Testimonials

“ I developed symptoms of mental illness in April 2020 at the peak of Covid 19 when I was 26 years old after being diagnosed with COVID-19. I was isolated, started having emotional problems for the first time and was hospitalized for one month. My darkest moment was when I was discharged from the hospital, I started having a lot of fear and feeling angry about life. Not getting along with family and friends was causing problems. But after the WPDI team visited me during their routine follow-up and home visits, I was able to reconnect with my family members without stigma. Thank you WPDI for giving me hope.”

*Sharon, from Acholi Sub-Region, Uganda*

“ The youth friendly Sexual and Reproductive Healthc services which are being conducted at the WPDI Community Learning Center in Yambio, include a range of reproductive, relationship and sexuality counseling services. So far, I have acquired basic knowledge, skills and ability to make responsible, positive, informed and safe sexual choices. Now the choice to make informed decisions is ours, and as the saying goes, “If you choose to close your eyes to facts, you will learn through accidents”. We the youth must take responsibility and make health a priority.”

*Emmanuel Victor, Youth Peacemaker from South Sudan*

## Support the Health & Wellbeing program

**\$10**

Purchase sanitary pads for school pupils

Donate

**\$50**

Support an awareness raising campaign on GBV

Donate

**\$1,000**

Strengthen capacity of our peacemakers in trauma healing

Donate





# Peace Through Sports

**Sports have a fundamental human appeal. They can connect people across cultures, religions, nationalities, languages, and other divides.**

When people participate in sporting activities, they can learn values, attitudes and behaviors of tolerance, mutual respect, fair play and teamwork. Sports can, in a few words, be an important tool for instilling life skills and a culture of peace and reconciliation. In this light, WPDI designed the Peace Through Sports program as a vehicle for young men and women to learn and practice those values, all while having fun and shining. The program includes life skills training, the organization of competitions and events and regular training sessions for teams and individuals with qualified coaches.

## Key Figures

**162** teams managed by WPDI  
in Uganda, South Sudan

**3,246** regular training  
participants

**25,694** participants in  
competitions and events

**44.5%** of sport activities  
participants are women and girls

## Testimonials

“

Playing football has helped me a lot. The positive advice I get from our regular training sessions has pushed me to remain in school. I have made good friends who only talk about positive things like how to become an international football player. All in all, the games have reduced stress and made my community enjoy leisure every evening here in my village of Lotugei.”

*Hellen Achien, 19 year old soccer player in South Sudan*

“

The sports program has been an amazing place for making friends with people from other groups and tribes. The refugee settlement hosts people from different tribes that were hostile at home, and before WPDI arrived, there were many fights. But with the Peace Through Sports program, I started meeting with girls from other tribes and we became friends. I learned how to play soccer, I practiced hard and became captain of WPDI's female football team. Last year, I joined South Sudan's National Female Soccer Team. Since then, I have scored nearly 80 goals and have been able to travel internationally for matches. I have also been able to have an impact by confronting the belief that women and girls cannot play football and support their families.”

*Esther Kide, former refugee in Uganda, who joined the national South Sudan's Female Soccer team*

## Support the Sports program

**\$10**

Purchase soccer balls or  
basketballs

Donate

**\$50**

Contribute to  
uniforms purchase

Donate

**\$1,000**

Organize a Whitaker  
Peace Cup

Donate



# Closing Thoughts

On Giving Tuesday, the Whitaker Peace & Development Initiative would like you to join us in our efforts to foster peace and sustainability in vulnerable communities around the world. You can become a part of our action. In places where so many talented and resilient youths, women, children and adults have an immense potential to become agents of change, your contribution can make a world of a difference. It will help make a lasting impact, because the skills learned by our trainees, the projects undertaken by our beneficiaries or the care received by our patients represent seeds of peace and resilience that have the potential to transform their lives and the lives of their communities for years.

With your contribution, you will be a part of the chain of change through which WPDl connects individuals and communities, striving to make them more peaceful, prosperous and resilient.

**Empower Us in Making a Difference. Donate Today**

Donate

[www.wpdi.org](http://www.wpdi.org)



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