



Voice KENYA Grant Manual Version January 2018



TABLE OF CONTENT

1. Letter from	3
2. What types of grants will be awarded?.....	5
3. How to make an application?	6
4. How will your application be assessed?.....	10
5. If your application is not successful	16
6. After a grant is awarded.....	16
7. Fraud/Corruption and Grievances.....	20
8. Annex I: Learning Questions & Learning Agenda.....	21

1. A letter from.....

"We pledge," says the UN, in its manifesto on the Sustainable Development Goals, "that no one will be left behind [in the collective journey to end poverty and inequality]." In addition, the most marginalised will be prioritised: "We will endeavour," the UN pledges, "to reach the furthest behind first."¹

It is in this context that the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs ("the Ministry") designed a special fund, called Voice, with the objective to support the most marginalised and discriminated groups in their efforts to exert influence in accessing productive and social services and political participation. Voice forms an integral pillar of the Ministry's overall Dialogue and Dissent policy framework² which aims to strengthen the capacity for lobby and advocacy of civil society organisations in low- and lower-middle-income countries to allow for participation in mainstream development processes. Voice is executed by a consortium of Oxfam Novib and Hivos which coordinate the programme at national level in the ten Voice focus countries³

Overall Voice targets five groups, namely;-



People with disabilities;



Women facing exploitation, abuse and violence;



Age-discriminated vulnerable groups, notably the young and elderly;



Indigenous groups and ethnic minorities;

Hivos is responsible for Voice Kenya, and aims to focus on the intersections and linkages between these groups. Following the contextual analysis, Voice Kenya identified the following groups as the focus for the programme; (i) **women and girls** in all their diversities who continue to suffer economically, socially and politically from gender inequities. The situation is grave for minority, indigenous and LBT women and girls who are at crossroads as they are discriminated against on multiple levels, women in vulnerable working environments and elderly women who are sexually harassed and physically abused privately and publicly; (ii) **youth aged between 18-35 years** persistently face the challenge of unemployment, are at risk of radicalization, harassment by the police, and face impediments in accessing essential facilities and services such as education and healthcare; (iii) **Transgender and Intersex persons** have continually fallen through the cracks of the LGBTI movement and they face inequality due to a lack of public understanding of transgender and intersex issues; (iv) **persons with disabilities** who have faced economic and social exclusion especially in accessing employment, health services and being integrated in society.

¹ <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/post2015/transformingourworld>

² <https://www.government.nl/binaries/government/documents/parliamentary-documents/2015/07/01/voice-the-accountability-fund-and-the-participation-of-civil-society-organisations-in-theme-based-calls-for-proposals/letter-to-parliament-on-voice.pdf>

³ The Voice focus countries are: Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, Indonesia, Philippines, Laos and Cambodia.

These groups are often the hardest to reach. Therefore innovative approaches to strengthening capacity of lobby and advocacy as well as empowerment are essential. A linking and learning process encourages sharing of lessons learned, and provides a forum for mutual learning and empowerment of the most marginalised and discriminated groups. Voice is initially a five-year programme, for which a total of €50 million is available for programme-, grants-, management- and linking and learning costs. This includes a total of €35 million available for grants, the Voice 2016-2020 Fund.

Most –if not all- the information is available via www.voice.global including all Calls for Proposals and relevant information regarding the grantees.

This grants manual is meant for (potential) grantees to help them decide on whether and how to make a grant and what the reporting requirements are. As with all documents in Voice it is a ‘living’ document; hence if you have any feedback on how Voice can improve its grant-making, you are very welcome to do so via hello@voice.global

Thank you for joining us on this exciting journey!

The Voice Kenya family



2. What types of grants will be awarded?

The Voice grant facility is designed to support informal groups as well as formal organisations and networks, although the applicant needs to be legally registered and have a bank account in the applicant's name. The Grant types are as follows:



Empowerment grant: Targeting (informal) groups or organisations to raise awareness, develop transformative leadership, build confidence and skills and work against stigmatisation of marginalised and discriminated groups. Smaller grants with average one year timeframe, is accessible for informal groups⁴ by partnering with formal organisations. Empowerment grants are available from €5,000 to €25,000, with a minimum timeframe of 12 months to maximum timeframe of 24 months.



Influencing grant: Targeting organisations and networks to strengthen their influencing, lobby and advocacy capacities and amplify voice of marginalised and discriminated groups. Influencing grants that are country specific are available from €25,000 to €200,000, with a minimum timeframe of 18 months to maximum timeframe of 36 months.



Innovate and learn grant: Innovate and Learn grant focus on organisations that want to learn from innovation and/or to test and scale new approaches with a focus on human-centred innovations that are context-specific and relevant to **empowering, amplifying and/or influencing the voice of marginalised and discriminated people** to participate fully in society. Innovation and learning grants are available from €5,000 to €200,000, with a minimum timeframe of 12 months to maximum timeframe of 24 months.



Sudden opportunity grant: Creating flexibility to undertake collective action to address specific unanticipated opportunities to influence policy or deal with a threatened reduction of civil space which impacts one or more of the Voice target groups in one or more of the impact themes. Grants responding to a sudden opportunity are available from €5,000 to €200,000, with a minimum timeframe of 6 months to maximum timeframe of 12 months.

For each modality of grant, there are different approaches related to making applications, assessing grants and reporting against grants. **Empowerment grants and smaller grants designed to address sudden opportunities** will be more flexible and contain fewer requirements. **Influencing and learning from innovation grants** will contain more requirements to mitigate risk and increase accountability. We also strongly urge you to review the Frequently Asked Questions available via: <https://www.voice.global/f-a-q/>

⁴ Groups which emerge naturally due to the response and common interests of the members of an organization who can easily identify with the goals or independent activities of the group.

Voice stands out from other grant-making programmes by developing a grant application and reporting process that is accessible, user-friendly and innovative adapted to the target groups and grant type.

3. How to make an application

Steps	Task	Activities
<i>Step 1</i>	Preparation for calls for proposals.	Based on country contextual analysis, Voice Kenya will provide guidelines for themes and subjects that the Call for Proposals could focus upon. This process will be repeated on an annual basis for each subsequent call for proposals. Additionally, we now have a specific analytics tool, Power BI, that will deliver insights throughout the grant making process
<i>Step 2</i>	Calls for proposals	Advertising the Call for Proposals as approved (at least 6-weeks for applicants to respond). Outreach and communication activities will be designed to reach potential applicants including Voice target groups.
<i>Step 3</i>	Support	The application process should be viewed as a capacity building exercise and applicants should receive useful feedback after the application is assessed. Hivos Regional Offices will organise information session on the proposal using creative settings.
<i>Step 4</i>	Screening	Voice is designed as a competitive application-based grant-making programme. Therefore, for an organisation to receive funding, it must submit an application, which will be reviewed using an open and transparent assessment method. Empowerment grant applications can be submitted in Kiswahili or English and in addition to submission of a written proposal, through audio and/or video. All other proposals need to be submitted in English.

Voice will screen proposal applications against the eligibility and criteria requirements (six weeks for screening with extension depending on number of applications received).

Apart from screening on the basis of eligibility, preliminary assessment of applicant capacity will be made. Site-visits may be undertaken as part of the screening process to ensure that applicants have minimum governance and accounting protocols and/or to review existing programming.



<i>Step 5</i>	Selection	Once the screening is complete recommendations for grant awards plus recommendations for capacity development are be submitted to the Country Office for final approval. Each short-listed application will be rated and ranked using the selection criteria provided below.
<i>Step 6</i>	Agreements	Once the project is finalised, Voice will enter into a Grant Agreement with successful organisations. The Grant Arrangement will apply for the period of time required to complete the project. The time plan and approved budget will be an integrated part of the Grant Agreement. The Grant Agreement will outline the requirements under the grant as well as other terms and conditions.

When should your organisation submit an Application?

Voice Kenya will publish all calls for proposals via Voice website www.voice.global, www.facebook.com/voice.global.online.

Applications for Empowerment grants and Innovate and Learn grants will be accepted on a rolling basis while Influencing grants will only be accepted according to a strict deadline. The rolling grants will have two review cycles a year. This means that proposals submitted before the deadline of the first review cycle will be reviewed during that cycle, anything after 1st June 2018, for example, will be reviewed in the next one.

For Sudden Opportunity grants you can write an Email any time to kenya@voice.global to explain the Sudden Opportunity in one or two paragraphs on why the opportunity is so sudden and unique.

The time line below applies;-

Type of grant	Submitted before	Response by
Empowerment	On a rolling basis with two review cycles 1 st June 2018 and 1 st October 2018.	For first cycle 16 th July 2018 and second cycle 12 th November 2018.
Sudden Opportunity	An open call. Applicants can pitch ideas anytime, followed by invitation to submit full application.	Four (4) weeks after approval of full application.
Innovate and Learn	On a rolling basis with two review cycles 1 st June 2018 and 1 st October 2018.	For first cycle 16 th July 2018 and second cycle 12 th November 2018.
Influencing	Launch on 1 st September 2018, and Close on 12 th October 2018 @ 23.59PM EAT	26 th November, 2018

For all rolling grants, proposals can be submitted anytime and their review against eligibility/ (“*threshold criteria*”) will be conducted within the review cycle with rejected applicants receiving responses and those considered for a project check informed accordingly. Those proposal that are taken to the final stage (“*organisational assessment*”) will have up to 12 weeks for proposal and

budget revisions, organisational assessments, donor checking and contracting. All applicants will be notified of the outcome of their application, but only those that have undergone a project check will receive detailed feedback.

Who can make applications?

Applications can only be submitted by organisations which possess legal registration and a bank account in the applicant's name. Organisations can independently submit a grant application or form part of a consortium in a joint application. A consortium is a cooperative of two or more civil society organisations, which implements a joint, integrated project in which all parties contribute to the total. They draw up a teaming agreement for this purpose. In this case, a consortium representative (known as the 'lead party') submits the grant application on behalf of the consortium as a whole. Only the lead party needs to be legally registered, not all of the consortium members. If the application is granted, the lead party is responsible for implementing the consortium's project. Applicants may form a partnership with other not-for-profit organisations or private companies to implement the project or certain of its components, however, such partnerships must be identified within the grant application. Applications may also include activities to strengthen the capacity of the organisation, please refer to the relevant sections below.

Where should we send our application?

Applications for grants from Voice must be submitted using the model application formats as stipulated and made available by Voice.⁵ Applications should be complete and without reservations and submitted via www.voice.global/kenya or the email address provided on the Call for Proposal itself. The email should have the Call for Proposal reference number provided in the "re:" line. Please note that the maximum file size of attachments that can be uploaded is 10 MB.

On the webform it is recommended to tick the Box: "Send me a copy of the responses." This will assure you that the application has indeed been submitted. Upon completion of the selection process we will send you an Email to inform you whether your application has been successful. We only provide detailed feedback for the shortlisted proposals that were rejected.

What if you have questions about the process?

Questions about applying for a Voice grant may be submitted by email or during consultative sessions. Before doing so we urge you to review the Frequently Asked Questions via <https://www.voice.global/f-a-q/> to see whether your question has already been responded to. In case of additional questions, they can be submitted by email to: kenya@voice.global. Your questions will be anonymised and published with answers on the Voice website where appropriate.

Consultative meetings will be organized by the country team and details of the time and venue will be posted and regularly updated on the website www.voice.global.

When will funding decisions be made?

⁵ The model application format can be downloaded from [http://www.voice.global/...](http://www.voice.global/)

If you are applying for a Voice grant, Voice will decide upon your application within six weeks of the deadline according to the schedule above. This doesn't apply for Sudden Opportunity grant which follow a different process (mentioned in the schedule as well). Please note that an organisation can apply for multiple grants but can only be contracted for one at a time. Please note this only applies to the lead applicant; you can be a co-applicant in a reasonable number of proposals.

What makes a successful application?

The following factors are provided as a guide to inform potential applicants of whether or not their application is focused on issues that are encouraged and therefore likely to be considered:

- Activities support and compliment “the Voice impact themes and target groups.
- Communication and engagement approaches that contribute to awareness, influencing understanding, cooperation and collaboration.
- Demonstration of links and/or coordination with relevant organisations, communities and government;
- Promotion and participation of women at all levels in activity implementation.
- Demonstration that benefits created by the project will be properly or widely disbursed.
- Activities that demonstrate long-term benefits for constituents and/or marginalised and discriminated people.
- Demonstration of skill and experience improvement in the community/civil society/sector and geographic area.
- Demonstration of project management understanding and approach to grant use.
- Promotion of inclusive and accountable transparent processes.
- Co-contributions proposed by organisation and/or Voice target groups i.e. labour, office, materials and funds.

Unsuccessful Factors:

- Application does not meet criteria.
- Application not in Voice format or key questions left unanswered.
- Activities with an unreasonable high proportion of administrative support costs and asset acquisition.
- Funding for freight
- In general, purchase of motor vehicles, land or buildings.
- Lack of competitive costing detail, and charges for application preparation – other than for Seed Funding.
- Funding of commercial services, investment or other commercial activities.
- Over emphasis on staff training.

Financial Guidelines

All applications should use the budget template provided with the application package. All budgets must be reasonable for the activities proposed and for the achievement of the outcomes of the project. Reasonableness is dependent upon the prevailing costs and rates of the country in which you operate. The “notes” section of the budget should be used to outline why a certain rate or estimate is made. For

per diem and travel rates, the budget should outline if a particular published standard is used for the estimate.

Approved Grant funds may only be used to cover costs actually incurred and expended during the Grant Period that are verifiable from the Grantee's records and that are allowable, allocable, reasonable, and necessary for the performance of the Project.

Linking and Learning

The Linking and Learning component provides an exciting opportunity to link to other stakeholders and to learn together. Voice promotes and supports linking and learning within the grants and throughout the programme. All grantees are encouraged to include linking and learning activities in their proposal and ways of working.

Therefore Voice invites you:

- To plan for involvement of the target group(s) and main stakeholders in all project phases and relevant decision making;
- To develop a change agenda for the project in particular and if relevant, for your organisation in general;
- To develop your own learning agenda or learning questions, *see Annex I with more information*;
- To join one of the existing and/or new groups or events focusing on shared learning and innovation.⁶ that will work on different learning questions;
- Propose innovative approaches or solutions that can be tested and if successful, be scaled up;
- To document all the learning and changes happening within your project;
- To engage in gathering stories of change as part of the monitoring and evaluation of the project;
- To engage actively with other grantees and the Voice team to overcome challenges and to learn from successes but even more, from 'failures' and challenges;

4. How will your application be assessed?

Voice uses a 3-step assessment process. These are:

1. Eligibility or threshold criteria: minimum standards that all applications must meet. If an application does not meet all of the threshold criteria, it will be rejected.
2. Criteria relating to the quality of the project proposal (project check).
3. Criteria relating to the quality of the applicant organisation or the lead party of the consortium (organisational check).

⁶ Internationally this is known as a Community of Practice.

For the small grants (empowerment grants up to €25,000) a lighter / adapted version of these types of criteria will apply.

Step 1: Eligibility/Threshold Criteria

The eligibility/threshold criteria are minimum standards that all applications for Voice grants must meet. The criteria are as follows:

- a.** Applications can only be submitted by organisations which possess legal registration and a bank account in the applicant's name, -even if just opened for the purpose of Voice.
- b.** The project will need to address one or more of the impact themes:
 - improving access to (productive) resources (finance, land and water) and employment
 - improving access to social services, health and education in particular
 - fostering space for political participation:
- c.** The project will benefit of one or more of the following target groups
 - People with disabilities
 - Lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans-gender, intersex (LGBTI) people
 - Women facing exploitation, abuse, violence
 - Age discriminated vulnerable groups notably the young and elderly
 - Indigenous groups and ethnic minorities

(Projects that address double vulnerabilities and/or double discrimination are encouraged and highly welcomed).

- d.** The applicant based in Kenya and the project must be implemented within geographical areas specified in the Call for Proposals.
- e.** As a sudden opportunity or threat cannot be influenced by one organisation or entity exclusively, an application to address a sudden opportunity must include collective actions⁷.
- f.** The applicant or the lead party (if the application is made by a consortium) is a legally registered not-for-profit civil society or community-based organisation with an operational bank account in the applicant's name.

⁷ Behaviour or actions of a group of individuals or organizations working towards a common goal. When individuals or organizations engage in collective action, the strength of the group's resources, knowledge and efforts is combined to reach a goal shared by all parties.

- g. The applicant or the lead party substantially works with the most marginalised and discriminated groups in society (particularly those of the Voice target groups) to build their capacity to lobby or advocate for their interests or to have their voices heard. For organisations with broader objectives it is also possible to demonstrate this on the grounds of the organisation’s track record.
- h. The applicant (and all co-applicants, if the application is made in consortium) is an organisation which has core values similar to the objectives of Voice, being the equal treatment and equal rights of every human beings, particularly regardless of gender identity, race, colour of skin, nationality or ethnicity, religious belief, disability, sexual orientation, social class and age.
- i. The applicant, lead applicant and/or co-applicant is not a (Consortium or Alliance) Partner of the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation Strategic Partnership within the policy framework of “Dialogue and Dissent”.
- j. With exception of Empowerment, Innovate & Learn Grants, applications for Influencing and Sudden Opportunity grants must demonstrate that, grants awarded from Voice derive no more than 50% of the total annual income of the applicant organisation. The applicant can demonstrate this is plausible on the basis of income over the 2016-2017 period and/or awards and grants it has secured for future years. If the applicant is the lead party, this criterion applies to the whole consortium. Consequently, if one organisation derives more than 50% of its annual income from awards granted from Voice, this may be offset by another party in the consortium. The table below illustrates how this is computed.

$$\frac{\text{Application Budget}}{\text{Annual income}} = \% \text{ of income sought from Voice}$$

NOTE: If the percentage of income sought from Voice is higher than 50% then the application is not eligible for funding (Influencing or Sudden Opportunity Grants)

- k. For organisations -involved in a consortium but not based in the country that the project will operate within, the annual salary of management and/or board members cannot be over the maximum amount of Euro 168,000 on an annual basis.
- l. A grant application must be for funding of one of the following grant modalities and must apply for an amount and duration corresponding accordingly:

Grant Modality	Minimum Amount	Maximum Amount	Min - Maximum Length
Empowerment	€5,000	€25,000	12- 24 months
Influence	€25,000	€200,000 (single country)	18 - 36 months

Grant Modality	Minimum Amount	Maximum Amount	Min - Maximum Length
		€500,000 (global multi-country)	
Innovate & learn	€5,000	€200,000	12- 24 months
Sudden Opportunity	€25,000	€200,000	6- 12 months

m. The proposed grant cannot fund activities undertaken in the past.

n. The proposed grant does not relate to the funding of commercial services, investment or other commercial activities.

Step 2: Project Check

If the quality of the project is insufficient, the application will not be considered. The project check assesses the quality of the project on the basis of the following generally quality criteria and with specific criteria listed for each type of grant:

General Criteria

1. *Context analysis*: the extent to which the proposal, especially the defined problem and objective, reflects context analysis findings.
2. *Project Success analysis*
 - The extent to which the project provides a description of outcomes, outputs, proposed activities and resources, and a clear link has been established between the outputs to be achieved and the resources necessary to do so.
 - Risks, monitoring and corrective action: satisfactory risk management is in place, consisting of a satisfactory risk analysis and a satisfactory system for monitoring and corrective action.
3. *Value-for-money*: the degree to which the project will efficiently utilise resources to undertake the activities and attain the outputs.

Please note that in case INGOs are invited to join as a technical partner by the lead applicant, only direct activity costs can be included in the budget and no management costs or costs of their HQ.

Empowerment grants

In addition to the general criteria, Empowerment grants will be assessed with the following criteria:

1. *Target Group Representation*: the degree to which the project and organisation involves, represents and effectively raises awareness, develops transformative leadership, builds confidence and skills of the target group.

Influencing grants

In addition to the general criteria, Influencing grants will be assessed with the following criteria:

1. *Target Group Representation:* the degree to which the project and organisation involves, represents and effectively amplifies voice and builds the influence of the target group(s).
2. *Advocacy and Lobby:* the degree to which the project will support target beneficiaries to influence stakeholders to implement new procedures and policies and create new and unexpected connections and partnerships.

Innovate and Learn grants

In addition to the general criteria, Innovate and Learn grants will be assessed with the following criteria:

1. *Target Group Representation:* the degree to which the project and organisation involves and represents the Voice target groups to learn from innovation.
2. *Innovation and scalability:* The degree to which an idea is new, given the context, and lead to the empowerment and amplification of one or more Voice target group(s). Includes an analysis of the applicants' capacity to implement, scale up and sustain.

Sudden Opportunity grants

1. *Target Group Representation:* the degree to which the project and organisation involves and represents the Voice target groups in the collective action.
2. *Meeting Opportunities:* the degree to which the project analyses and responds to a new opportunity and as a collective action responding towards an unexpected moment or opportunity for advocacy or mobilisation that may result in advancements for the rights of Voice Target groups.

Step 3: Organisational Check

For organisations to be awarded a grant within Voice the organisational assessment needs to be satisfactory in terms of quality. The organisational check must be completed satisfactorily and its entirety. Deficiencies found through the organisational check will be communicated with the applicant to develop a capacity development plan that may be funded by the Voice grant. Organisations which are determined to be high risk as a result of the organisational check are ineligible for funding.

The organisational assessment will be a review of the following: Governance and Integrity, Financial Management and Procurement, Human Resources and Program and Project Management. The scope of organisational assessment is dependent upon the type of grant applied.

The organisations should be open and motivated to learn and interested in the key Voice principles. The answers to their self-assessment could be discussed. The Voice country team could compare the organisation's assessment with their impressions and agree on possible capacity development needed to be included in the grant.

The assessment process is a moment to promote inclusion of linking and learning elements in the grant proposals. When needed, the Voice country team can organise a (brainstorm) session with several grantees to come up with areas of common interest and possible activities to bring people together around a common aim or theme. It is also an opportunity to promote the inclusion of creative actions in the proposals.

Empowerment Grants

Applicants for Empowerment grants will be assessed with the following criteria:

1. *Governance and Integrity*

- The applicant has a clear purpose and acts on decisions collectively.
- The degree to which the leadership is respected by the target group.

2. *Financial Management:*

- The quality of financial and administrative management is adequate to safeguard payments and purchases.

Influencing Grants and Sudden Opportunity Grants (one country grant of more than €25,000 and less than €200,000)

In addition to organisational assessment criteria of applicants of empowerment grants, applicants of one-country influencing or sudden opportunity grants will be assessed with the following criteria:

1. *Governance and Integrity*

- The applicant has a coherent and realistic strategic plan. (review of the quality of formulation of objectives, intended results and indicators; explanation of strategic choices)
- The applicant is accountable to and communicates effectively with its primary constituents/beneficiaries. The applicant (management) encourages and supports internal learning and reflection processes.

2. *Procurement and Finance Management*

- The quality of financial and administrative management is adequate to ensure financial accountability. (Budget, funding plan, financial management, financial report)

3. *Programme and Project Management*

- The applicant has an appropriate monitoring and evaluation process (documentation & data collection, involvement of stakeholders, quality of analysis and learning)

4. *Human Resources*

Please note that for small social enterprises and start-ups are eligible to apply for the Innovate & Learn grant. Under this criteria, applicants need to demonstrate that the core activities of the organization have a direct social purpose, with business approaches where the core focus is social impact.

5. If your application is not successful

You will receive written notification if your organisation has not been approved for funding. We encourage you to contact Kenya@voice.global to arrange for discussion about your application. Often, this feedback process can assist an unsuccessful applicant to identify weaknesses in their application, to re-think their proposal and possibly to re-apply for the next call for proposals.

6. After a grant is awarded

What happens if my organisation is approved for funding?

Voice Kenya will invite you to discuss and finalise the project. This will provide an opportunity to review any changes that may have taken place since writing the application. It also provides an opportunity for Voice and your organisation to review the project risk and make small revisions to the activities, timeline and outputs as needed. From the review of the application, Voice may also have some questions or concerns that we will ask your organisation to review and consider.

The Grant Agreement

Once the project is finalised, Voice will enter into a Grant Agreement with your organisation. The Grant Agreement is based on the authority provided by the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Grant Agreements will be concluded with organisations for well-defined and described proposal. The Grant Arrangement will apply for the period of time required to complete the project/research. The time plan and approved budget will be an integrated part of the Grant Agreement.

The Grant Agreement will outline the requirements under the grant and other terms and conditions that your organisation will need to adhere to. The Grant Agreement will cover among other things performance standards and terms of release of funds that may be in tranches. A copy of the Grant Agreement will be provided by Voice. The person with signing authority in your organisation will need to sign the Grant Agreement prior to proceeding with financial management arrangements. Projects approved for funding will normally be required to begin within one month of the signing of the Grant Agreement (execution).

An *organisational capacity assessment* will be concluded with grantees, and plans to improve a grantees capacity can be incorporated within the final Grant Agreement. The Grant Agreement will apply for the period of time required to complete the activities. A time plan and financial projection will be an integrated part of the Agreement. Capacity Development Agreements may be implemented and managed by the Voice Consortium at request of the grantee.

General Technical Assistance and Capacity Development in respect of project management, administration, and accounting, among others, will always form an integrated part of any agreement involving support from Voice.

How will the Grant be Monitored & Evaluated by Voice?

Voice management and staff will monitor the integrity and performance of all grants approved. Voice will conduct site visits, financial audits and compliance inspections on a periodic basis.

For all projects, recipients will be required to safe keep financial records and receipts for inspection as needed. All grantees will be subject to periodic and regular review and unannounced spot-checks by Voice. Annual audits will be required of all grants valued at more than €100,000. The costs of the audit need to be included in the budget proposal. Apart from this, a number of other grants will be subject to audit, the selection of which will be based upon recommendations of the Voice Kenya team.

How will your organisation communicate with Voice?

If your organisation has any questions or concerns about the Grant Agreement or how to report, please do not hesitate to contact us. We are happy to answer your questions and help you with fulfilling the requirements under the Grant Agreement. Your first contact will be outlined in the Grant Agreement. You are also welcome to contact us to talk about improving your organisations ability (operational, management and technical); the Voice Kenya team may have some suggestions on this.

If your organisation is not able to meet the requirements under the Grant, then you must contact Voice. The Voice team will try its best to work with you to come up with solutions to help your organisation move forward and learn from setbacks. In some cases, especially as a result of events that are not in your control, you can request a modification of the Grant. As soon as you think that circumstances may require a change to your Grant, please write to the Voice Kenya Programme Officer via this email address kenya@voice.global to receive guidance before submitting the request.

How will your organisation report to Voice?

Your organisation will be asked to report to Voice about the implementation of your grant. The format of the report and the frequency of reporting will depend on type of grant and grant period and will be included in the grant agreement.

To this end we have developed two different versions to capture progress on your project milestones: a light one, for reporting periods that are less than one year (most likely every 6-months) and a “plus” one, for your annual and end-of project report. At minimum Voice requires six-monthly reporting.

Please find here a brief summary of the information we like to capture with each type of reporting template:

A. Milestone light

In the Milestone light version we focus on capturing the following information:

- External environment: Any important changes happening in the local, national, regional, or global context (e.g. changes in existing legislation) that relates to and impacts your project and target group(s).



- Progress against milestones: Milestones reached in this reporting period and budget allocation to those, planned milestones for the next reporting period, changes to original workplans and reasons therefor.
- Engagement with your project stakeholders: What type of activities are you using to engage with the target groups of your project? Which one(s) of these activities did you find particularly successful? Have you encountered any difficulties reaching out to / working with those groups?
- Risk analysis and mitigation strategies
- Project learning and innovation: What have you learnt from the implementation of your project thus far? How are you documenting your learning? If the learning is documented online, please list links and websites. What are you and/or marginalised and discriminated groups (your project beneficiaries) doing differently, as a result this project? Voice project milestone report? Has Voice enabled you (and/or other organisations working with you as part of this project) to use new ideas and/or innovative approaches to your work? If yes, how?
- Project results: Activities, outputs in this reporting period, and expected outcomes linked to those.
- Your Monitoring and Evaluation approaches and links to the Voice global MEAL framework: Which one of the 3 outlined global Voice outcomes is your project contributing to?

B. Milestone plus

In the Milestone plus version we focus on all of the above points, in relation to the relevant reporting period plus:

- Progress against your learning questions: How have you approached them and who have you worked with around each one?
- We have outlined some more detailed outcome-level questions that are linked to empowerment (creating safe spaces, building confidence and skills), alliance building and influencing instruments.

Change stories: At the end of your project, we would like to ask you to think about narrating a story that depicts the change on an individual or a group that your project has contributed to. The way that you will narrate the story is completely open: It could be in a narrative form, audio, video, etc. We have classified the categories of change that we would like to zoom in, on the report itself. Our global Monitoring and Evaluation officer is at your disposal for any questions in relation to the stories.

In general, to ensure learning from the process is not lost, grantees should reflect on the learning journey of the programme. Based on the organisation's change agenda and learning questions, grantees will be invited to participate in local learning events or national and global communities of practice. Grantees will be contributing with their project experiences to a process of learning about transformational change based on practical experiences. We also suggest, a project based reflection. We recommend carrying out an evaluation with the organisation, key target group and stakeholders on the challenges faced and strategies developed to overcome these; on the engagement process of all stakeholders. It can be useful to write up your thoughts on the process as well as the outcomes and any

thoughts you have regarding the socialisation of the knowledge/learning products and how they could be used more widely in Voice. The Voice Country Team will be able to support and provide guidance.

Financial reporting also depends on the size and the life span of the grant and will therefore be included in the grant agreement. Financial reports need to be delivered in the template provided.

Your organisation will maintain a separate ledger for the Voice grant that includes all project expenses. Based on this ledger you will calculate the project expenses per budget line, register this in the appropriate column in the template and calculate in a separate column how much money is left for that budget line and percentage. You may shift funds from one budget line to another, but only to a maximum of 10% and you will always inform the Voice team about such changes. If you required changes over 10% you will have to obtain approval of the Voice team beforehand.

Supporting documents, that prove that you made the expenditures, need to be kept on file for a period of 10 years after the project ended for a possible audit. More details on which supporting documents you need to keep on file will be given to you by the Voice Country and/or Coordination Team.

Forms

The appropriate forms such as application form, budget template as well as assessment template will vary with each Call for Proposal. The correct forms will be made available with each Call for Proposal available via www.voice.global

7. Fraud/Corruption and Grievances

Fraud is described as “dishonestly obtaining a benefit by deception or other means”. The Voice has a “zero-tolerance” to any forms of fraudulent or corrupt activity. This means that Voice, supported through Oxfam and Hivos policy does not condone any form of fraudulent or corrupt behaviour in its operations such as payment of bribes, facilitation payments or “hidden” commissions for any reason. Organisations receiving Voice funding support shall have mechanisms in place to manage fraud including prevention, detection, investigations and reporting.

If you suspect irregularity, please report to the responsible Regional Director and/or the Voice Programme Manager globally who will immediately report to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the Netherlands. Voice and the Ministry reserve the right to conduct investigations into cases of suspected fraud. All suspected cases of irregularity will be handled and investigated in a confidential, prompt and professional manner.

The Regional Director will resolve the issue within two-weeks of receiving the grievance. If the grievance is not resolved in time or to the satisfaction of complainant, the Programme Manager will initiate an investigation of the grievance. In instances where the Programme Manager does not resolve the grievance satisfactorily, it may be elevated to the Voice Steering Committee who has the authority as per the Dutch Staatscourant decision dated December 2, 2016 to make final decisions with respect to a grievance or complaint.

We also refer you to the Whistleblower policy available via www.voice.global.

Annex I: Learning questions and the learning agenda

(By Bruce Britton & Shailendra Thakali⁸)

Questions are incredibly powerful tools. Questions help us to learn by prompting us to make sense of our own experience, draw on existing knowledge, test assumptions, seek new explanations, make connections, and generate insights.

Organisations should aim to create and sustain a learning environment that enables, encourages, and values learning at all levels in the organisation. Part of that learning environment involves creating an organisational culture that encourages curiosity, questioning, critical reflection and sensible risk-taking among all staff in the pursuit of greater organisational effectiveness.

The purposes of learning questions

A learning question may address one or more of the following purposes:

- i. ***Seek solutions to problems*** – as mentioned earlier, it is not always clear how best to achieve our objectives. A learning question can help us to explore options and devise solutions.
- ii. ***Explore assumptions*** – our projects and programs are based on sets of assumptions. These may not have been properly tested in the planning stage, although they may be crucial to the success of our work. A learning question related to assumptions can enable us to examine our assumptions in a rigorous and systematic way.
- iii. ***Test and revise Theories of Change*** – during the course of implementation we may have to think again about the Theory of Change that underpins the design of our work. A learning question can prompt us to do this in a systematic way.
- iv. ***Stimulate creativity and innovation*** – learning questions can encourage us to consider new approaches to our work, test these out, and adopt them if they work.
- v. ***Contribute to the wider knowledge base*** – learning questions can be devised to address gaps in our own understanding and the wider knowledge base.

Characteristics of good learning questions

A good learning question has the following characteristics:

- a) It is an 'open' question that starts with 'How', 'What', 'Where', 'When' or 'Who' ('Why' questions don't work as well as they can create defensiveness).
- b) It is relevant to the real work of the people who will be exploring the question.
- c) It is developed in consultation with those who will be involved in answering the question.
- d) It is a genuine question – a question that is currently unanswered in the given context.
- e) It is likely to stimulate fresh or innovative thinking / approaches.

⁸https://www.google.co.ke/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=2&ved=0ahUKEwiOwYnJmajZAhWLuhQKHakmAq0QFggtMAE&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.globalfokus.dk%2Fimages%2FKapacitetsudvikling%2Findsatser%2FSOL_ressourcedatabase%2F1._Toolbox%2FArticle_Learning_Questions_Tool__Bruce_Britton.pdf&authuser=1&usq=AOvWaw06kxTYiL2nyyFXeF2-if8H

