



CONNECTING VOICE(S):
Voice Uganda
Linking and Learning Facilitation

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1 Introduction

1.1 Background to Voice

Voice¹ is an innovative grant facility to support the most marginalised and discriminated groups in their efforts to exert influence in accessing productive and social services and political participation. Voice in Uganda targets four groups, and these include:

- 1) People living with disabilities;
- 3) Women facing exploitation, abuse and/or violence;
- 4) Age-discriminated vulnerable groups, notably the young and elderly;
- 5) Indigenous groups and ethnic minorities.

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.

As part of the grant facility there are four types of grants available, each with their own application and reporting processes. They range from multi-year Influencing grants, Innovate and Learn grants, Sudden Opportunity as well as Empowerment grants. The latter are aimed at supporting (informal) groups or organisations to raise awareness, develop transformative leadership, build confidence and skills and work against stigmatisation of marginalised and discriminated groups.

1.2 Linking and Learning objectives

Voice Linking and Learning refers to the total of activities, processes and trajectories realised to boost collaboration, connectedness, sharing, listening, learning, innovation and application of new knowledge. It aims to produce evidence, learning and innovative solutions to catalyse transformative change for the most marginalised and discriminated groups.

In the original tender document, the linking and learning process was described as follows:

A linking and learning process enables the sharing of experiences and lessons from (innovative) initiatives, allowing for scaling up of successful projects. Objectives are:

- A mutual learning process: exchange of knowledge, experiences and lessons learned amongst grantees, contributing to the empowerment of beneficiaries. The fund management agent should

¹ An initiative from the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Voice is a partnership between Oxfam Novib and Hivos. For more information please visit www.voice.global

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take into account any challenges (including logistics) that may arise in bringing these groups together.

- Local ownership of the learning agenda through an endogenous process in which the needs, existing knowledge, expectations and questions of the beneficiaries are put at the centre.
- Sustainability: the linking and learning process is to be designed in a way that it can be sustained after the official duration of Voice.
- The linking and learning process has a connection with the proposed system for monitoring and evaluation of programs.

Within Voice these objectives have been further developed and the following outcome framework applies for the Linking and Learning component:

<p>TARGETED OUTCOME 2.1</p> <p>Marginalised groups, CSOs and other key stakeholders develop and implement innovative and effective strategies to reach, empower and strengthen influencing capacities of marginalised and discriminated groups</p>
<p>Output 2.1.1: Programme staff and local partner organisations implement appropriate approaches to reach and facilitate the definition of learning agendas by communities of practice</p>
<p>Output 2.1.2: Communities of practice enable (informal) groups, organisations and networks obtain new insights on effective and innovative lobby and advocacy practices and strategies</p>
<p>Output 2.1.3: (Informal) groups, organisations, networks and other stakeholders develop, share and document (new) knowledge on effective and innovative lobby and advocacy practices and strategies.</p>
<p>TARGETED OUTCOME 2.2</p> <p>A linking and learning infrastructure is in place that visibly contributes to the insights, understanding and innovation capacity of grantees and other stakeholders of the program</p>
<p>Output 2.2.1 Voice will enable the constant sharing of insights, ideas, and evidence through the knowledge sharing facility (online & offline)</p>
<p>Output 2.2.2 Voice has enabled relevant stakeholders on country and global level to access and use an evidence base on innovative and effective strategies to reach, empower, amplify and influence</p>
<p>TARGETED OUTCOME 2.3:</p> <p>New ideas & approaches have been prototyped, tested and evaluated, ready for scale, shared and potentially adopted by relevant stakeholders</p>
<p>Output 2.3.1: Voice has allocated grants to prototype and test promising ideas and approaches</p>

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Output 2.3.2: (Informal) groups, organisations and networks have collected and documented evidence on the effectiveness of promising ideas

These are the global targeted outcomes and outputs. Within this framework, different options are possible for the exact design of the linking and learning process. Each country will develop its own linking and learning plan.

1.3 Reason behind this Call for Proposals

Marginalisation and discrimination translate into different dimensions of exclusion (social, economic, spatial, political, and gender dimensions).

People who are on the margins of development risk to have marginalised voices. This may be because of one or more of three factors:

- (a) either because their plight is not attended to by other actors (such as national governments, aid agencies, international organisations or indeed business corporations) whose actions and policies could be modified to facilitate improvements;
- (b) or because their plight is caused by the policies and actions of other actors who oppress or discriminate against for a variety of reasons (economic exploitation, oppression because groups are seen as 'other'/inferior such as indigenous people or minority ethnic groups)
- (c) or because their plight is caused by the fact that other actors intervene in their affairs in inappropriate ways, imposing inappropriate development models and so on, not through oppression but through failure to hear the 'voices' of the marginalised.²

Even in linking and learning processes such as multi-stakeholder meetings, exchanges, communities of practice and research, often other people participate on 'their' behalf. Within the Voice programme grantees and target group members aim to 'leave no one behind' and embark on a journey together with those concerned. This requires meeting up, talking, sharing, and understanding each other's work and views. Respectful and empowering. And based on Nothing About Us Without Us.

The Voice Programme is looking to engage an institution, an organisation or (social) enterprise that is capable and willing to:

1. Facilitate safe, inclusive spaces for grantees and Voice target group members to gather insights on the Voice grant making process and to enhance the grantees' capacity to be inclusive. This may include:

² N. Dower: Report to IIED December 2004 p.4



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- a. Reaching out in such a way that the most marginalised groups Voice works with are aware about the fund and participate in the projects;
- b. To channel marginalised people's voices and change agendas to Voice and other stakeholders.

To do so the organisation will facilitate participation of all Voice grantees in communities of practice, learning sessions, and in online and face2face meetings and platforms.

2. Amplify the voices of marginalised and discriminated groups, including Voice grantees, and put their ideas and identities in the public space.
For the latter, different media formats will be used to raise their voices and share their concerns to the wider audience. Innovative offline options will be explored such that areas that have little or no internet access, for instance, communities in remote rural areas, indigenous groups, and other disenfranchised groups alienated from the information society participate in learning as well as in generating new knowledge.

The role of the identified L&L support will be twofold:

- 1) to bring together all Voice grantees and support the Voice country team when needed to gather data on the effectiveness of the grant making, on the learning agendas of the individual grantees. This includes financial and logistic organisation of events and exchanges. And if possible, to provide a platform for the inclusion of all grantees and other stakeholders involved at country level; and
- 2) to create space for public debate, dialogue and action informed by collated information from Voice grantees. They will develop initiatives to address the gaps and enhance participation and visualisation of the marginalised in national development processes as part of efforts towards realising the Leave No One Behind agenda.

Pimp the Voice's key responsibility is to make central the voices of individuals too often relegated to the margins, telling untold stories, and empowering the public with the correct perspectives.

2 Description of key deliverables and Voice principles and instruments

2.1 Expected deliverables

The linking and learning organisation selected to implement the *Connecting Voices* project, will work in straight collaboration and coordination with Voice Indonesia as well as the Global Coordination Team. Some key tasks and deliverables expected from this contract are:

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Deliverables	Description
Connect all Voice grantees and stakeholders in a country-wide or multi-country network or platform;	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meetings need to be facilitated at the local/regional/national levels. Participants will be supported in the development of their learning questions prior to meetings. Support the articulation of grantee change agendas and the formulation of national change agendas. The platform needs to be inclusive for both online and offline sharing.
Organise annual linking and learning events at least once a year;	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> L&L events can either have a national or regional focus. The budget includes transportation, accommodations, and food expenses of all attendees. Attendees will be a combination of grantees, non-grantees, and other stakeholders.
Produce internal and external publications on new knowledge and understanding, using a variety of media and audiences;	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Internal/external publications can take many forms such as research papers, opinion pieces, explainers, and documentary videos. Information and data needs to be presented in creative and engaging ways.
Recommend and support local grantees or stakeholders in preparation of and to participate in the Voice Global Annual Learning Event or other relevant Voice events outside the country;	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There will be at least 1 global learning event every year. Selected grantees/stakeholders may need to access and analyse available data, prepare a presentation using multimedia. Learnings from all the global events needs to be communicated back to grantees.
At the request of the Voice team, gather inputs at the country level to contribute to the global learning events and/or other communities of practice;	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Act as a bridge between the grantees and the Voice Global/Country Teams whenever necessary.
Gather and document successful inclusive and participatory methodologies and approaches used by grantees and others. Make these available to all and add to the global collection.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The global collection is an online resource intended to be a knowledge library from all 10 Voice countries. It will be publicly available to catalyze further linking and learning even after Voice has ended.

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Applicants are expected to develop proposals on how they envision the linking and learning process. The project plan needs to include:

- The proposed tools/ channels of communication to be used among groups;
- The proposed audience to be reached out;
- The meetings/ learning events frequency;
- The effective methods/ approaches on enabling learning environment;
- The proposed strategy in formulating and synthesizing different learning agendas.

2.2 Key principles and instruments

Voice is guided by the key principles listed below in its planning and implementation. All applicants are expected to be familiar with, adhere to, and follow these same principles throughout the tender period.

Leave No One Behind - No person – regardless of ethnicity, gender, geography, disability, sexual orientation, race, (age,) or other status – should be denied universal human rights and basic economic opportunities³. The consortium sees civil society as a platform for citizens to raise their voice, key to vital democratic societies and inclusive and sustainable development. Putting the furthest first.

Nothing About Us Without Us! (Latin: "Nihil de nobis, sine nobis"), a saying highlighted since the 1990's by the movement of people with disabilities. This slogan communicates the idea that no policy should be decided by any representative **without** the full and direct participation of members of the group(s) affected by that policy. In line with this saying, Voice will promote full and direct participation of members of the group(s) affected by the Voice interventions and the individual grantees' projects. Further it will support people-led lobby and advocacy and encourage learning on successful inclusive approaches.

Inclusion – is related to attitude, communication, accessibility & participation. It can be understood as a set of linked, unending processes to do with the participation of individuals: the creation of settings, systems (procedures, policies, and laws) that encourage participation; and with putting 'inclusive' values into action. All three are about everyone rather than about a particular group.⁴

Knowledge generation and exchange should include the people concerned in all aspects and produce accessible information using various media.

Innovativeness - Innovative approaches are sought in all key components of Voice. Being innovative means not only creating new ways of working but also creating space for improvement in every step

³ The commitment to 'leave no one behind' has been a key feature of all the discussions on the post-2015 agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals.

⁴ <http://www.indexforinclusion.org/themeaningofinclusion.php>

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of the implementation of Voice, which can entail different steps in different contexts. This implies flexibility, to allow for the implementation of new ideas. For instance, reaching out to groups that have never been reached before requires creativity and flexibility to respond to new ideas.

Voice is furthermore innovative, because of its explicit focus on the inclusion of informal civil society organisations, because marginalised and discriminated groups are often not formally organised. Also, the space for 'failures' is innovative: to encourage experimental and innovative projects, taking risks is allowed and failures are framed as lessons to learn from. The linking and learning process provides an environment for different groups to share and learn from successes and failures of others.⁵

Community of Stakeholders - is a co-created space that will enable the target groups and their organisations and networks to meet with other local actors and have direct involvement in the national Voice programming and learning.

Communities of Practice (CoP) - Voice Communities of Practice provide space to reflect, articulate and share lessons, and support their practical application through methods and grants. Grantees and target groups form the core of CoPs, with additionally local experts, government agencies, donors, media, and role models to join activities such as informing development of the learning agenda.

Respect for diversity requires Voice to be open, respectful, and self-reflective. Voice promotes people led action and human centred innovation. Voice seeks to collaborate with creative, edgy, and innovative frontrunners to bring that diversity to life.

2.3 Innovativeness

Innovative approaches are sought in all key components of Voice. Being innovative means not only creating new ways of working but also creating space for improvement in every step of the implementation of Voice, which can entail different steps in different contexts. This implies flexibility, to allow for the implementation of new ideas. For instance, reaching out to groups that have never been reached before requires creativity and flexibility to respond to new ideas.

Voice is furthermore innovative, because of its explicit focus on the inclusion of informal civil society organisations, because marginalised and discriminated groups are often not formally organised. Also, the space for 'failures' is innovative: to encourage experimental and innovative projects, taking risks is allowed and failures are framed as lessons to learn from. The linking and learning process provides an environment for different groups to share and learn from successes and failures of others.⁶

⁵ Voice tender Appendix E programme document

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3 Implementation arrangements

3.1 Coordination

The applicant will work in direct coordination with the Voice Project coordinator and Voice Linking and Learning Officer in the country, who will also monitor implementation and be responsible for quality management. Following this Call for Proposal the respective Oxfam Country Director as well as the Voice Coordination Team represented by the Linking and Learning Coordinator, will approve the final project plan and budget. All daily coordination and communication will be the responsibility of the selected Linking and Learning organisation, the Voice Linking and Learning Officer and the Programme Officer.

3.2 Monitoring and Evaluation

The Linking and Learning component is one of the two result areas of Voice and therefore completely integrated in the Voice results framework. The monitoring and evaluation of the outputs and outcomes will need to be closely linked to the overall Voice monitoring and evaluation practice and contribute with quantitative data as well as qualitative data gathering through stories of change, outcome harvesting, participatory videos or theatre, event reporting and alike.

3.3 Reporting and publications

A reporting schedule will be agreed upon, to provide timely inputs into Voice reporting schemes. Furthermore, the organisation will commit to record all facilitated processes and make these reports available to all involved (through at least sharing them on Box the Voice online sharing facility). Publications following exchanges, learning events and the journey of a community of practice, will be planned accordingly. Lay-out and branding will be local but should take into account the Voice branding guidelines. Official Oxfam sign off needs to be respected. Personal and organisational safety and security are guiding.

3.4 Applicant capacity and track-record

Proven experience in facilitating dynamic learning processes, successful exchanges and thought-provoking publications, with high level of accessibility. Preferably considered a frontrunner in its field.

The applicant has strong experience in reporting and publications and will provide proof of earlier products. If the organisation collaborates with other partners on some aspects/tasks, they will provide sufficient information on these partnerships.

The applicant organisation needs to be registered as a civil society organisation or social enterprise for at least 2 years and able to submit audited financial statements.

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The applicant organisation must have a positive image in the country, is known for being reliable and credible with a positive influence on the public especially the target groups and stakeholders. It must not have encountered any problems with the local and/ national authorities in the past or any political conflict of interest.

The applicant organisation is a risk taker and self-starter with a proven capacity of thinking out of the box to address issues in different, innovative ways.

If worked with Oxfam, the applicant organisation must have a clean financial record.

4 Financial arrangements

4.1 Available budget

The maximum budget is Euro 200,000 (Exchange rate is EUR 1 = UGX 4500) for 24 months.

All costs associated with organising events including but not limited to costs for participation should be covered from the grant.

Things/ items to probably be considered in the budget:

- Periodic/annual meetings/ with target groups/stakeholders/community of practice
- Learning events/ capitalisations/evaluations/timely event celebrations (such as international women's days, handicap day, youth day, etc.)
- Internal travelling (field research, experience /knowledge sharing, linking group to group, village to village for scale up, etc.)
- Publication/ printing/digital communication/translation/media coverage/
- Other MEAL and communication activities (data collection, story gathering, baselines, end lines, etc.)

4.2 Due diligence, audit and compliance

All applicants will be required to submit the following documents:

- Letter of Registration in Uganda as a company limited by guarantee or as an NGO
- Last 2 financial annual statements.
- Last 2 annual reports.



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5 Application procedure

Following the Calls for Proposals that will be launched both on the Voice website: <http://www.voice.global/country/uganda/>, all interested organisations are asked to complete the application narrative and finance forms with the required supporting documents and submit it via the Smartsheet link available online before or 30th April 2018 at 5pm East African Time. Alternatively, your application will be submitted to: Uganda@voice.global for consideration.

The application process has the following schedule:

- Call for Proposals: 13th April – 30th April 2018
- Assessment: 2nd May – 30th May 2018
- Feedback: 15th June 2018

The committee's decision will be final, transparent, and accountable. Feedback will be provided to non-successful applicants. We also reserve the right to publish the successful proposal in our commitment to transparency.

6 Standardising terms

Voice elaborated a list of standardising terms in use in the programme. Please click on the link.

<https://oxfam.box.com/v/Standardisedterms>

Note: Those who applied earlier, should not re-apply.