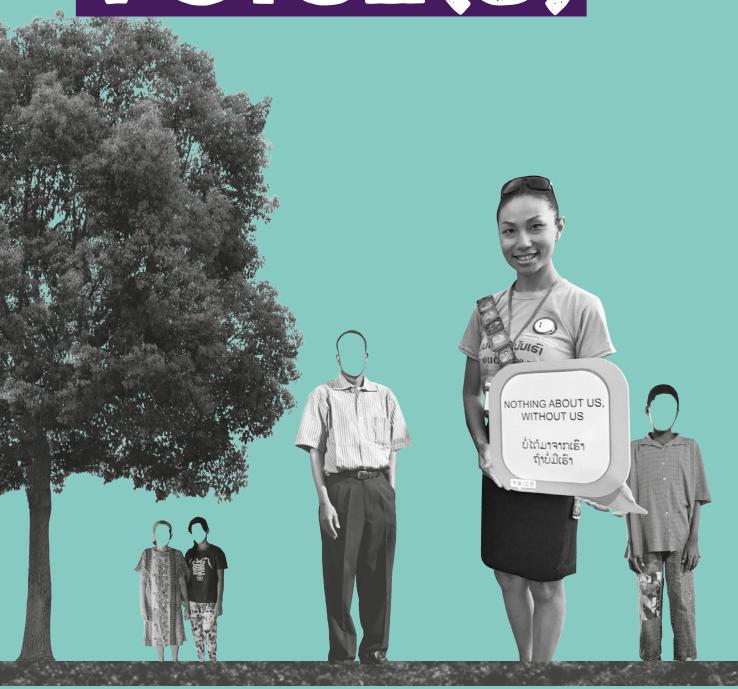
DISRUPTIVE









INNOVATIVE GRANT FACILITY

Voice is an innovative grant facility that supports the most marginalised and discriminated people in Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Cambodia, Laos, Indonesia and the Philippines. It aims to amplify and connect thus far unheard voices in efforts to leave no one behind.

Voice is an initiative by the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs and is executed by a consortium between Oxfam Novib and Hivos.







Empowerment

Targeting (informal) groups or organisations to raise awareness, develop transformative leadership, build confidence and skills and work against stigmatisation of marginalised and discriminated groups. Informal groups can access funding by partnering with a formal 'host' organisation. Empowerment grants are available from €5,000 up to €25,000 on a rolling basis at the national level.

Influencing

Targeting organisations and networks to strengthen their lobby and advocacy capacity and amplify the voice of marginalised and discriminated groups. Influencing grants that are country specific are available from €25,000 to €200,000 while a global multi-country call goes up to a maximum of €500,000.



Innovate and Learn

For groups and organisations to test and scale new approaches with a focus on human-centred innovations that are very context-specific. Innovate and learn grants are available from €5,000 to €200,000 both through a national and/or global call for proposals.



Sudden Opportunity

Creating flexibility to undertake collective action to address specific unanticipated opportunities. This could be influencing policy or dealing with a threatened reduction of civic space. Sudden Opportunity grants are available on a rolling basis from €5,000 to €200,000 at national and global level.

TARGET GROUPS

Voice aims to strengthen the capacity of Civil Society Organisations representing the voices of the most marginalised and discriminated groups in the ten Voice focus countries. Informed by the national context, Voice works with the following target groups:



People living with disabilities



Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI) people



Women facing exploitation, abuse and/or violence



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



Indigenous groups and ethnic minorities

IMPACT THEMES



Improved access to resources and employment



Space for political participation



Improved access to social services, health and education

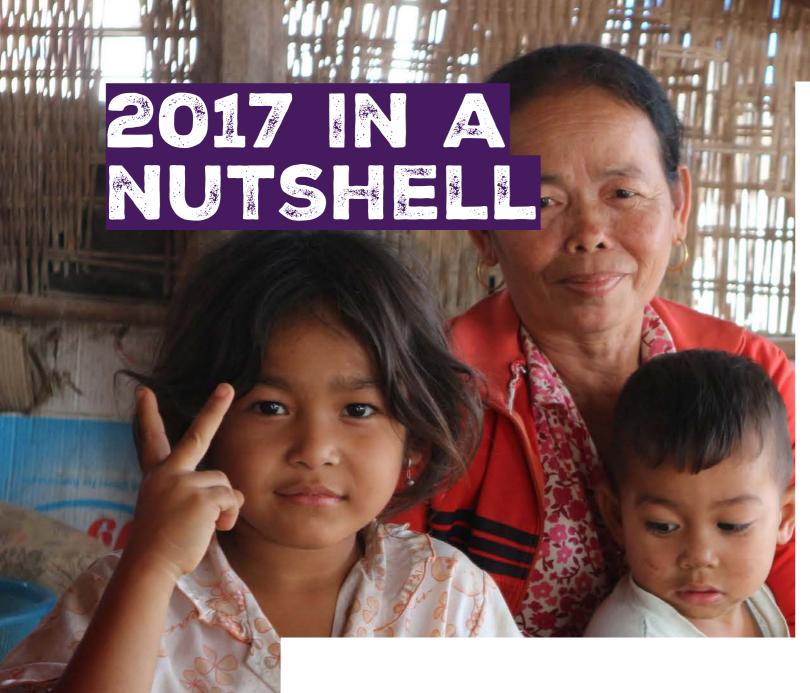
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THANK YOU

This report is the result of joint efforts of Voice grantees and the Country and Coordination Team. Thank you for unleashing beautiful voices!





Participant of My Voice, My Story (LGBTI project of ComASEAN Cambodia) with her kids

Whilst 2016 was the year of co-creation, design and planting the roots for grant-making, 2017 focused on finalising the national launches, expanding the grant portfolio, making grant-making processes more effective and targeted, developing tools to capture and analyse our grantees' preliminary results, learning from our and grantees' practices and connecting with others. The faces and voices that are slowly but surely emerging are powerful and disruptive, explaining not only the report's title, but more importantly allowing us to add faces to our visuals and brand- which thus far remained faceless. As Voice grows, we will unveil more faces and voices.



2.193 PROJECT APPLICATIONS

from 50 Calls for Proposals



71 PROJECTS

involving 121 organisations or groups



3 REGIONAL WORKSHOPS

on inclusive facilitation and ways of working for our staff and grantees completed



EMERGING STORIES

in blog posts, articles and interviews on the Voice Website



DIGITAL GRANT APPLICATION SYSTEM

in place available via the Calls for Proposals page online.



GLOBAL GRANT DATA DASHBOARD

tested and ready to generate visual overviews of our results framework and management information



No person – regardless of ethnicity, gender, geography, disability race or sexual orientation – should be denied universal human rights and basic economic opportunities; in other words, development processes should leave no one behind.

In late 2016, 10 independently written context analysis reports conducted in Voice focus countries Nigeria, Mali, Niger, Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, Philippines, Laos, Cambodia and Indonesia pinpointed that inequality and marginalisation are, indeed, closely interlinked. The people that suffer most from poverty are also the ones whose voices are often not heard nor respected and are, therefore, excluded from participating in society.

Voice is set up as an innovative grant facility created to reach those

groups of people that are socially, economically, politically and spatially excluded. Managed by a consortium between Oxfam and Hivos, Voice's grant-making mechanism and innovative Linking & Learning infrastructure, specifies five groups that are targeted by the Sustainable Development Goals' aspiration to leave no one behind: people with disabilities; LGBTI people, women facing exploitation, abuse and/or violence; age-discriminated vulnerable groups; indigenous people and ethnic minorities.

This is Voice's first annual report that highlights key facts and figures, achievements and lessons learnt over 2017. The report is structured according to the building blocks of Voice in the Annual Plan 2016-2017. Following this introduction, we present in detail How We Work, describing our modus operandi after which we look at our outreach programme (How we find the grantees) and grant management (Who we fund). The report ends with a detailed overview of the learning infrastructure (How we learn) as well as a report on progress against the agreed MEL framework (where we got to) and a financial overview.

Focusing on intersectionality and diversity

One of the programme's unique identifiers that was highlighted in 2017, is the emphasis on directly involving representatives of the most marginalised and discriminated groups we aim to support. The principle of Nothing About Us Without Us is strongly enshrined in all our project design and learning activities: from co-designing Calls for Proposals on specific topics to co-creating and facilitating learning events and capacity strengthening activities. All funding windows designed by Voice prioritise intersectionality, by specifically focusing on groups that experience the compounded effect of multiple vulnerabilities, such as disabled transgender persons, or young exploited women; poor elderly women; young LGBT; youth deaf activists, teenagers with Down syndrome. Voice's grant portfolio supports a diverse set of formal CSOs, networks, and informal, community-based groups

that range from women- and youth-led community-based groups to research institutions, disability-serving think-tanks, and universities. Thus far, Voice has supported 121 non-governmental organisations, grassroots groups and/or social enterprises with financial means and capacity strengthening activities.

Placing emphasis on women and youth

"Exploring Voices", a global synthe-

sis report on the baseline findings in 10 focus countries, underlined that exclusion and the inequality of poverty particularly affects women and girls: they are more deeply affected by pervasive traditional views on women which exacerbates isolation. Abuse and exploitation and limited access to economic resources are common. Their voices are less heard in civil society and decision-making bodies. Development actors, often see them as passive recipients rather than actively helping to make their voices heard. Throughout the entire range of project and programme-level activities in 2017, Voice has been actively promoting a key role for women and youth; Approximately 50% of Voice currently active grants focus on women and youth, intersecting with other groups.

Co-creating, testing and reflecting

Being a learning programme at its core, Voice has been working hand in hand with marginalised and discriminated groups to jointly explore, test and reflect on the role that technology, arts, culture, education and participatory action research can play. This has been done by creating

themselves identify as the most effective influencing approaches. Alongside our aim to contribute to long-lasting, transformational change in the lives of those furthest behind, we equally aspire to generate and broker knowledge so that other development programmes can be more inclusive and impactful. Grantees and stakeholders are encouraged to jointly explore, test and scale innovative approaches and new knowledge. This happens in the form of blog posts via the Voice website, via Facebook pages and during Voice learning events, like the first Inclusion Innovation Indaba. Voice takes learning seriously, which at the end of 2017 led to the unusual move to explicitly change grant criteria and processes, based on the feedback of turned down grant applicants. 'You shared, we listened' was Voice's message to them, publicly listing changes in the grant-making process (relaxing income restrictions for prospective grantees, allowing for audio and video applications and reports for empowerment projects, simplifying the contracting process for Sudden Opportunity grants). Working closely and learning together with the groups that Voice aims to strengthen, is also at the core of our grantees' project design. Project activities are carried out in a decentralised and bottom-up fashion; all the organisations we directly fund, and their implementing partners, are flexible to develop their own workplans within the programme contours and within the allocated budget.

a body of evidence of what groups



STRENGTHENING OUR PROCESSES

Voice approaches grant-making through a decentralised, adaptive management approach that builds upon its presence in and knowledge of country contexts to ensure downand upward accountability and continuously seeks to improve its grant-making processes, systems and tools in place.

Most programme activities are managed by country staff located at Oxfam or Hivos in the ten Voice focus countries. In Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Uganda, Laos and Cambodia Voice is coordinated by Oxfam, while in Kenya, Tanzania, Indonesia and the Philippines Hivos is responsible. The coordination team works at both the Oxfam and Hivos office in The Hague, while at the same time is decentralising key posts further to the Voice countries.

In 2017, the Consortium put the following processes in place to foster programme quality

Nurturing peer learning through internal quality audits: to assess the quality of programme implementation at country level - as well as compliance with grant and financial management procedures - and measure performance and value-addition. Audit teams are constituted of the Voice finance coordinator or programme manager, and a third party that is either a financial or a programme officer from another Voice focus country. Quality audit schedules entail meetings with members of the Voice country team where the audit takes place, meetings with the country management, and field visits to selected grantees (a sample is determined ad-hoc, based on risk assessment). A first round of audits that took place in the last quarter of 2017, enabled country and coordination teams to better understand local context, exchange practical tips in financial management and start building an evidence-based list of recommended changes to the overall Voice processes.

On an annual basis, the Voice coordination team brings together country teams to reflect on programme achievements and challenges through annual programme reviews. The 2017 meeting took place in The Hague. The team:

- reflected on outreach practices and the first round of grant-making at national level;
- developed a 3-year plan including detailed timeframes for Calls for Proposals (CfPs);

- developed a bold and creative outreach plan aligned to the CfPs considering the needs of each Voice target group;
- practiced write-shop techniques to develop more exciting and innovative CfPs and elicit innovative proposals
- and based on experiences of the first year, the team provided feedback on the latest version of the Voice Process Manual

"A lot of creative thinking went into the methodologies of the workshop, which exceeded my expectations especially in seeing how different Voice is."

Programme Officer, meeting participant

"It is great that finance is part of these workshops (as we are often excluded) and we can engage"

Finance Officer, meeting participant

Exchanging monthly progress reports and virtual reflection meetings (E-meets) has become an integral part of our programme cycle management process. Report templates allow Voice country teams to share progress towards set objectives within each workstream (grant and financial management, monitoring and evaluation data, linking and learning activities), share practical examples/case studies and lessons learnt, as well as exchange views with peers on how to overcome challenges. The monthly video-conference is attended by representatives from all country teams and, occasionally, an external guest speaker that is

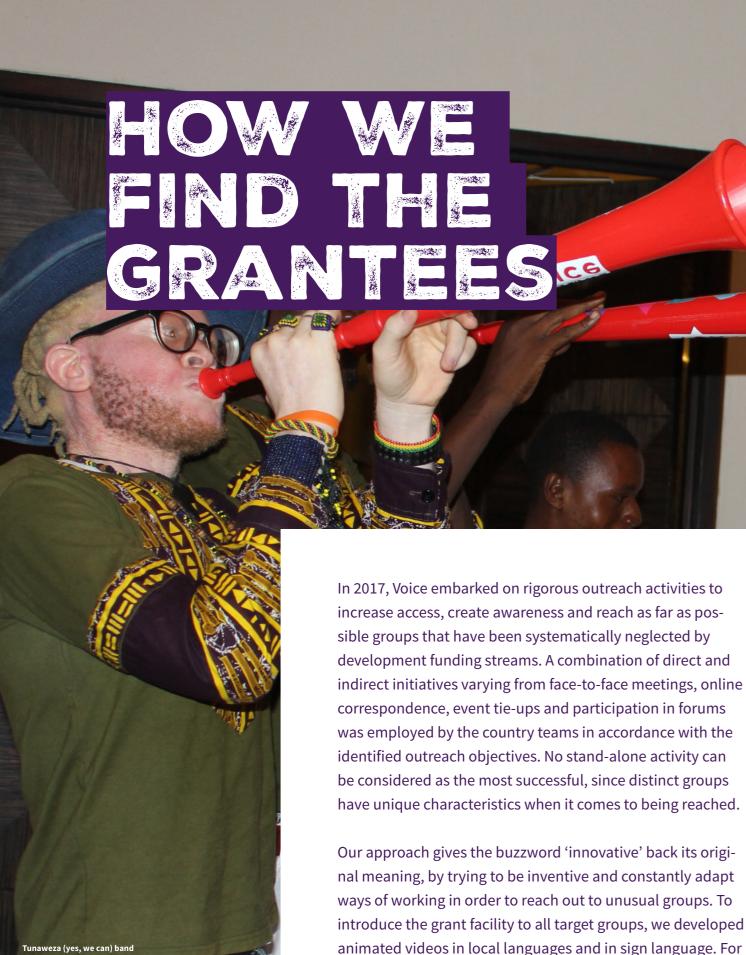
selected on a particular theme on an ad-hoc basis.

Increased engagement with Advisory Board In 2017 the Advisory Board decided to meet twice a year, rather than having one annual meeting as planned originally. One of the meetings is held in the Netherlands while the other one is ideally aligned to a national Linking and Learning event allowing for more learning, exposure and visibility of the Advisory Board vis-à-vis the programme. For 2017 two meetings were organised in the Netherlands: in February the meeting was aligned with the presentation of the findings of the global context analysis (jointly with Civicus) and in October we organised a Voiree (Voice Soiree) whereby Advisory Board member Nidhi Goyal performed her stand-up comedy. The minutes of the Advisory Board meetings are all

available online.

Advancing the visibility of Voice has formed a major part of our activities in 2017. As the stories emerge we need to make sure to showcase them and to support their amplification. We have made major investments in our bilingual website now reaching an average of 5000 unique visitors a month, have reached close to 2800 subscribers to the monthly VoiceMail Newsletter and have invested in a story-telling tool to amplify the voices of the grantees. Overall, we are proud of the way the Voice grantees are presented enabling an exact tracing of the Call for Proposals, impact themes, target groups as well as a complete commitment to IATI requirements on transparency. Our presence on social media has grown (Facebook and Twitter) although admittedly needs to be invested in further.

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Capitalising on existing, high-traffic virtual platforms

The success of 2017 in terms of reaching out to unusual suspects, lies heavily in the involvement and use of social networks and media to mobilise target groups. For most Voice focus countries, virtual outreach has proven to be a strategic alternative. We learnt that when financial means are modest, yet connectivity is reliable, capitalising on mass-emailing ("e-blasting") can be effective. In the hotpot of modern day social media outlets, surprisingly, e-mail blasting played a significant role in the outreach that preceded the inaugural Call for Proposals.

The recipients of our information digests, were not hesitant to re-blast this information within their own networks (which is like the virtual version of snowball outreach). The internet has been broadly used in Indonesia to reach out to spatially marginalised youth. The Voice team based in Jakarta capitalised on existing web platforms to disseminate information related to available funding windows; a form of "virtual outreach": browsing potential and unusual applicants' websites, Facebook pages and Twitter handles, and contacted them via email or phone. Having a virtual connection with the prospective applicant has greatly saved time and money as well as extended Voice's network. However, we also still believe the direct approach is crucial to maintain more concrete connection. Below follow some further non-exhaustive highlights.



Engaging with local TV channels and radio stations

In Mali grant proposal information and orientation activities in the form of information sessions, inclusion-focused debates and interviews with the Voice programme officer were broadcasted live on local TV channels and radio stations. All discussions aimed to target organisations and groups in Bamako and the regions of Ségou and Mopti and activities received social media coverage (Facebook, Twitter, printed press) which greatly contributed to enhancing the visibility of the programme.



Using snowball outreach

The Voice team in the Philippines disseminated CfPs through an "e-mail blast" to relevant CSOs who later joined the national launch in February 2017, as well as to big networks and coalitions operating across the country. The organisations and networks who received the communication consequently committed to circulate the information to their members and partners.

In the spirit of snowball outreach, information on a funding window is always amplified through regional organisations working on inclusion of marginalised and discriminated groups, for further dissemination to their national partners. CfPs in Indonesia have been distributed by the ASEAN SOGIE Caucus and the Affiliated Network for Social Ac-

countability in East Asia and the Pacific. Grant information has also been shared with the Land Rights Now campaign and their partners such as Tebtebba and AIPP, who were later awarded with a multi-country influencing grant. The Asian Development Bank NGO Center has also agreed to share CfPs and grant information with its partners in Indonesia.



Engagement with Embassies

In all countries where there is a Netherlands Embassy, Voice country teams liaise and coordinate activities. As part of grant selection, Embassies -where desired- are sent a list of approved projects to assess if there is duplication (especially with Accountability Fund). In other instances, such as in Kenya, Mali, Indonesia and Tanzania there is a pursuit of joint work, especially to engage with minority groups.

In Kenya Voice participates in the SOGIE International Forum hosted by the Netherlands Embassy in Nairobi which continues to provide opportunities to understand emerging trends and development around SOGIE (Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity or Expression) issues. It is in this forum that Voice Kenya got engaged in exploring possibilities of funding the Intersex taskforce in Kenya under the Sudden Opportunity grant, including the on-going litigation case seeking to declare the relevant sections of the Penal Code unconstitutional.

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types, organisations can apply or report using audio or video

in their local language.

in their local language.

empowerment grants, the smallest of the four Voice grant



HOW WE FIND THE GRANTEES



Using the power of human contact

Human connections are not only a necessity in the lives of human beings, but also were invaluable in the outreach activities undertaken by the Voice country teams.

Kenya

In Kenya, the more personal, offline approach and working through existing channels such as women groups, traditional leaders and other mainstream organisations made it possible to reach the desired audience which often experience barriers to accessing information through other forms of communication. In efforts to make outreach more targeted, Voice organised a one-day forum to bring together organisations from pastoralist and other communities working on harmful traditional practices, such as Female Genital Mutliation, and other human rights issues for girls and young women in traditional pastoralist and other marginalised communities.

"I was particularly pleased to see the direct engagement of grassroots level organisations who were given the opportunity and voice to identify strategies tailored to work in the counties. The forum was well designed to identify gaps especially engagement with local organisations in networking and proposal writing to help secure grants"

Gitonga Njagi, IDPO

Mali

In Mali, awareness-raising activities helped the country team to target the most unheard voices more effectively through specialised Calls for Proposals. For instance, a CfP was issued to support people with disabilities and women at risk of exploitation, abuse and/or violence at the workplace, to enhance self-confidence and to create spaces where they can express themselves and collectively defend their rights. Besides, the team organised proposal writing sessions through so-called Portes Ouvertes (Open Door), for candidates of empowerment grants.

Tanzania

The Voice Programme officer in Tanzania, undertook outreach-oriented field visits to 4 regions of Tanzania including Zanzibar. The visits aimed to make sure marginalised groups are reached where they are, creating safe spaces for learning and providing coaching. Because of those visits, the number of proposals received exceeded expectations in Tanzania; for example, for the Influence Call Voice Tanzania received a total number of 114 project proposals.

Cambodia

In Cambodia, both interactive discussions in group settings and individual feedback sessions helped explore opportunities for local groups to work together and provided a safe space for participants to ask questions. Twenty-three participants from eighteen organisations attended a single session, coming from different regions such as Kep, Kampot, Koh Kong, Sihanouk Ville and Phnom Penh. Participants' testimonials proved the added value of such sessions in listening to and co-creating with communities.

"I admired this creative outreach event, its fruitful benefits to youth team to share their ability in applying for grants and our youth's contribution to address the challenges of those five Voice target groups"

Ms. Chap Nika, member of JoY-Cambodia

Uganda

Utilising the structures of the national NGO forums in the sub-regions of Lango, Anchilo, West Nile and Karamoja, helped the Voice team in Uganda to amplify information about Voice's objectives, target groups and funding windows at a national scale

Laos

In Laos, the Voice team picked up on the momentum created the previous year, by engaging with a vibrant community of youth and LGBTI activists. Several information sessions took place with a variety of organisations and networks, including theatre groups, youth dance companies, film festivals, vocational training centres, such as Khao Niew Theatre, Vientianale International Film Festival, Vientiane Youth Centre and the Youth magician group. In parallel, joint events were organised with like-minded consortium-run programmes: The Oxfam Partner Workshop 2017, International Youth Day, Youth Survey Finding Presentation Workshop, Gender Network Meeting, CSOs Fair 2017, and Civil Society proposal writing workshop.

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WHO WE FUND

IN 2017, VOICE SUPPORTED 71
PROJECTS IMPLEMENTED BY
121 ORGANISATIONS ACROSS 10
COUNTRIES IN AFRICA AND ASIA.
WE ARE PROUDLY FUNDING:



Empowerment projects

implemented primarily by community-based groups and/or informal groups seeking to raise awareness, to develop transformative leadership, to build confidence and skills and work against stigmatisation of marginalised and discriminated groups. Empowerment projects, with a one-year timeframe on average, have been accessible for informal groups partnering with formally registered organisations, social enterprises or microfinance institutions.



Influencing projects

with an average life-span of two and a maximum of three years, implemented by networks and larger CSOs, seeking to strengthen their lobby and advocacy capacities to amplify the voices of marginalised and discriminated groups under their umbrella. As the Influencing grants also have the longest duration, this grant type was prioritised in the first national Calls for Proposals.



with an average lifespan of one year.

Innovate and Learn projects are im-

plemented primarily by CSOs, com-

munity-based groups and/or social

enterprises with the main objective to

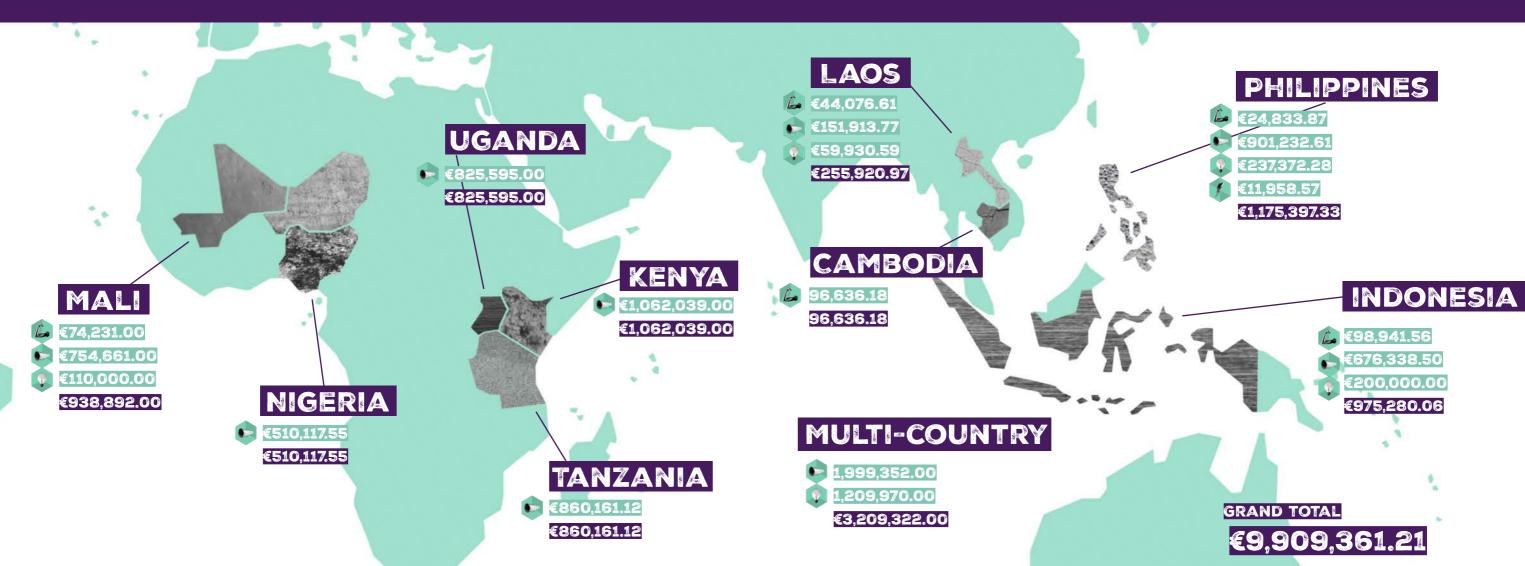
test, learn from and potentially scale

new ideas and approaches.

Innovate and Learn projects

Sudden Opportunity project

was approved in the Philippines but since it was granted confidentiality, specific information is not disclosed on the website. In general, Sudden Opportunity projects undertake collective action to address a specific unanticipated opportunity. This could be influencing policy or dealing with a threatened reduction of civic space. Grants responding to a sudden opportunity have minimum duration of six and a maximum duration of twelve months.



SELECTING THE GRANTEES

Grant allocation per type of project has been determined by consulting national Communities of Stakeholders to analyse the status quo of the five marginalised and discriminated groups, resulting in a context analysis that provided insights into which groups have been:

- mostly affected by poverty or having made least progress towards development outcomes (former MDGs);
- mostly affected by social, economic, spatial and political exclusion;
- ignored or not reached by development actors;
- at risk of repression or violence for speaking out for their rights.

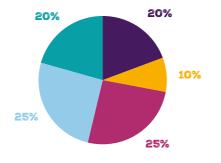
GRANT TYPES Empowerment Influencing Innovate & Learn

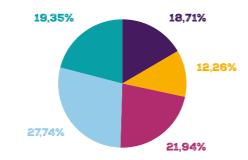
Sudden Opportunity





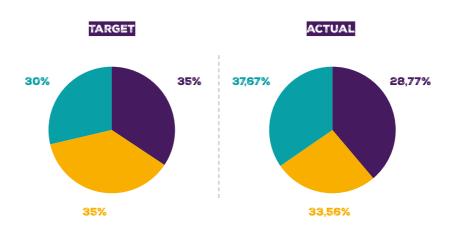
- People with disabilities
- LGBTI people
- Women facing exploitation, abuse and/or violence
- Age-discriminated groups
- Indigenous groups & ethnic minorities





IMPACT THEMES

- Access to (productive) resources (finance, land and water) and employment
- Access to social services, health and education in particular
- Space for political participation



Based on the country context analyses and meetings with Communities of Stakeholders, Voice allocated grants to project proposals that aim to catalyse change around three thematic areas of impact:



Improved access to (productive) resources (finance, land and water) and employment

38% of the overall grant portfolio is allocated to projects working towards improved access to (productive) resources (finance, land and water) and employment. 55 projects currently active aim at lifting barriers to economic inclusion. 58% of those (namely 32 projects) are particularly for women, youth and indigenous groups under exploitative or vulnerable employment conditions and empowering people with disabilities that face barriers to decent work.



Improved access to social services

29% of the overall grant portfolio is allocated to projects working towards improved access to social services, in particular health and education. 42 projects aim at making quality services more accessible to marginalised and discriminated groups that face exclusion because of language barriers (e.g. ethnic minorities), distance (e.g. rural populations and ethnic minorities) or neglect. 64% of those grants (namely 27 projects), focus on issues that particularly affect youth and women, who often lack the information and tools to demand better services.



Space for political participation

34% of the overall grant portfolio is allocated to projects working towards creating space for political participation. 49 projects currently active, aim at strengthening marginalised and discriminated groups that often face obstacles to participating in public debate, e.g. lack of information or organisation. 55% (namely 27 projects) particularly focus on indigenous groups, ethnic minorities and LGTBI people that face most repression.

LESSONS LEARNT

In general, 2016-2017 grant-making benchmarks were found to be too ambitious. Instead of the planned 124 grantees and 14.8 million Euro in allocation, Voice awarded 71 grantees allocating 9.9 million Euro. During 2017, planning was already adjusted accordingly. Major delay factors were:

- the fact that the granting process started later than foreseen due to the fact that some country teams were only early 2017 fully in place;
- the negotiation processes with potential grantees is taking too long, which caused subsequent delays in the administrative processes.

Empowerment

The planned targets for empowerment projects were not reached. In 2017, 14 grants were allocated for empowerment projects, as opposed to 65. The main reason is that more attention and time investment is needed for outreach and application support for which more capacity is needed. A dwindling number of proposals and changes in organisational assessment criteria were also contributing to delays in the contracting process.

Sudden opportunity

Also, a significant difference is seen with Sudden Opportunity grants, with a target of 6% (of number of allocated grants) and the actual 1%. The nature and purpose of this particular grant type is often misunderstood. Proposals were destined for other grant types for which the applicant missed the deadline or brought forward issues that ware not emergent ("sudden)". Based on these observations, the Sudden Opportunity grant making process has been revised, and the Voice team launched a dialogue with Civicus around jointly fighting civic space threats by using Sudden Opportunity grant windows.



In late 2016, Voice embarked on its journey to unravel what human-centred innovation means, by supporting grantees to explore, test and reflect on new ideas or existing approaches applied in a new context. 2017 yielded a handful of insights and early indications of what constitutes individual, systemic, formal and informal change through innovation for the target groups. Overall, we came a few steps closer to achieving our long-term goal to strengthen influencing capacity of organisations and representatives of marginalised and discriminated groups, by using innovative capacity strengthening. Identifying and working with "unusual suspects" has been at the core of our programme design.



Adi, the pineapple jam maker.

Adi's dream is to sell his pineapple jam. You can even order his tasty jam! He's also now experimenting with baking muffins. He can very well be the only person with Down syndrome who is attending public university at Bogor Agricultural University. The first time he attended class, he barely spoke a clear word. But now he has become more confident, this has improved a lot. He always stands by to help the other students.



Irfan, the djembe player.

Irfan is such a sweet student, who is always ready to help. He always cheers up his friends when they are sad by comforting, gently calling and even massaging them. He always smiles sincerely. Even the teachers search for his face for strength if things get 'difficult' in class. Irfan is a good djembe player and often on stage at events. You can invite Irfan for your event! Always be a kind boy, Irfan!



Faiza, the bocce athlete and musician.

Faiza is the most mature student. She is multi-talented, smart, humble, and dreams about entertaining people with her keyboard. She is one of the D'Stars band members together with her friends. You can invite the band to your event! Faiza could become the leader in the intellectual disability movement in Indonesia. The road is long, but you can do it, Faiza!



Morgan, the chef patissier.

Morgan has held his first presentation in front of his classmates and parents. Self-advocator on the making and a big fan of Irsyad!



Irsyad, the swimming athlete.

Irsyad has every reason to be proud of himself with all his swimming medals. He won them in Los Angeles (USA), Australia and the latest even in Singapore. This shy and quiet boy, who smiles when you talk to him, is Morgan's inspiration. Morgan just started swimming a few months ago and his swimming teacher always praises Irsyad and says: if you eat more you will be able to swim with more force, like Irsyad. Now Morgan meets his inspiration in the class. It's a small world after all. Inspire more people, Irsyad. You are what you are.



Afra, the hip hopper.

Afra is our supple hip hopper, although sometimes it looks like trance dance, just because she is so into it. She doesn't know yet what she would like to become when she grows up. Afra is an expressive student and able to speak about her feelings with confidence. She confessed that her boyfriend just broke up with her, because his parents disagree with their relationship. But the boyfriend says he is the one being dumped. The class is indeed different, but the students feel no shame on sharing their feeling and stories. But sometimes they say: pssttt... don't tell my mom!



Edo, the musician.

Edo is a keyboardist, the front-liner in D'Stars band and the most hilarious student in class. Compared to his first day in class, he is not shy anymore. He regularly texts friends and family via WhatsApp, sending his music recording or just asking how they are doing. If you have any event, invite Edo and his friends and give them the chance to show off their skills. Keep practicing, Edo!



Defrey, the preacher.

Defrey is the student who never forgets to pray. He grabs every opportunity to pray for his mom in heaven. He even prays before receiving his allowance. Defrey is not really active in class, but he has the best memory of his friends' names. If he starts talking, he can't stop. He also understands English quite well. Unfortunately, he is quite a picky eater. He doesn't want to taste any of the provided snacks, he only eats spaghetti or noodles.



Kimi, the singer.

Kimi is the youngest in class. She loves to sing, but what she wants to become when she grows up, she does not yet know.

She always helps her therapist by getting papers organised and she considers it as a job for which she needs to be wellpaid. Her speaking skills are good; she sings clearly in English, even though she doesn't understand the words. Be more confident, Kimi!

coaches and parents. They
were confidently showing who
they are and what they can
happily do. The majority still
have challenges speaking in
correct and complete phrases;
questions need to be asked
in a simple fashion. Often,
they respond with one word,
but responding they do! Most
importantly is that the group
gained confidence and is happy

coaching on self-confidence,

themselves to each other, their

nine young students with Down Syndrome presented

and that is the best reward.
- Coach Dewi Tjakrawinata

to be part of a community





BUILDING UNUSUAL ALLIANCES

PROJECT: #ITHECHANGE BY YADEN IN TANZANIA. KENYA AND UGANDA

Using performing arts in developing contexts is not new; in fact, Theatre for Development has been used by organisations to bring communities together and create safe spaces for people to learn and reflect on changes in their lives. Once applied with marginalised groups in repressive environments, theatre can yield miraculous results. The story of Learning From Innovation grantee Youth, Arts, Development and Entrepreneurship Network (YADEN) is an impressive on.

space for more than 200 young people that have been in conflict with the law. Post-activity evaluations showed that performing and reflecting together, increased their feeling of self-worth; participants felt content and able to deal with their rehabilitation, but also felt well positioned to share important lessons on how to empower and engage young

people in conflict with the law like them-

selves, with their peers. They started to

In Kenya a theatre stage became a safe

articulate their plight as a highly vulnerable and marginalised group. Authorities usually perceive them as a security threat and the community stigma isolates them and keeps them from rehabilitation. They actively engaged with law enforcement and community members with art-based messages though drama, video and songs and participated at the ArtVocacy Festival.

Even though the odds were against them, they proved authorities that they can positively contribute to the society and social, economic and political progress and are now working together to create change. It has been a truly encouraging and inspiring process to see the participants presenting themselves as facilitators and providers of knowledge. It has the potential to impact many and not only being on the receiving end of knowledge. Stakeholders learning from this project have been encouraged by the youth participants, a motivating factor for some to continue engaging. Post-activity

evaluations showed that 89% of youth engaging in performing arts learnt something new about their position and their role in empowering and engaging other marginalised young people.

"When the judiciary was invited to be part of this project and I was selected to represent them, I thought we will be getting an expert facilitator. When I saw we were learning from the youth, some of whom had been involved in various levels of crime, though now reforming, I was very sceptical of being part of this, but after the sessions I have gained a lot of knowledge and understanding and I am using it in my research work. Many of my colleagues want to join, the reason I have invited members of youth in conflict with the law to the judiciary, courts to interact"

~Madam Nanyonga Annet, Research Department Representative from Mengo Magistrate Court Kampala



STORY OF CHICHANG

PROJECT: INNOVATIVE COMMUNICATION METHODS BY MCNV AND CO-PARTNER PROUD TO BE US LAOS



This is Chichang, 20 years old and from Laos. Chichang is sexually attracted to other girls and participated as the main actress in the shadow drama 'Forbidden Love". This play was shown as part of the Innovative Communication Methods: its use and learning led by MCNV in which 'Proud to be Us Laos" was a partner. MCNV was among the first 8 Learning from Innovation grantees.

Before getting involved in "Forbidden Love", Chichang was timid and lacking self-confidence. She was not brave enough to have a girlfriend and thought her family and society would not accept it if she dated or had a romantic relationship with another girl. She thought it would be better to stay alone for the rest of her life. Living without love, just waiting to die.

The main character in the play took suicide pills because of an obstructed love. Through the play, Chichang realised she did not want LGBTI persons to struggle with these feelings. She wanted to fight

and show the society that LGBTI persons have loving hearts too. She gained confidence and felt the freedom to express herself. The shadow play changed the view on her position in society and has taught her to keep fighting and be strong!

Chichang had the opportunity to meet people with disabilities during an exchange trip to Cambodia together with the Laos Disabled Peoples Organisation. She saw their strong hearts and their will to do whatever they can, despite their disabilities. It showed her what you can achieve with courage and focus. She also attended the International Lesbian and Gay Association Asia Conference last December in Phnom Penh. She met many other LGBTI persons and learned from all their life stories and experiences, like how to deal with society and your family to gain acceptance. In a lot of countries same-sex marriage is legally allowed. Chichang hopes that one day she can also legally marry her partner. At least, now she is already brave enough to have a girlfriend.

Chichang always got a lot of questions, like if she was "a girl or a boy?". She always replied that she was a girl. After the conference, she started saying that she a tomboy. Biologically female, but with a short haircut, dressing like a boy and attracted to other girls. She explains she may not have children, but she can still have a loving and respectful relationship and also lots of straight married couples are happily childfree. Chichang is happy to be asked; it means that people have an interest to learn. When they know more about this issue and understand, they will start being comfortable with the LGBTI community.

Through the project Chichang learned a lot about the work and operations of various organisations and was also given the opportunity to join a Youth Policy project run by UNESCO in Thailand in collaboration with the Lao Youth Union. This project is under development and Chichang will be one of the leaders of the survey on young LGBTI persons in Laos.





Learning is at the heart of Voice – for all stakeholders we offer opportunities to engage, reflect and learn. This asks of ourselves and all who journey with us, to be reflective and open, and to seize each opportunity to share, to explore and to reflect more deeply. To give real meaning to the linking and learning agenda we have developed a multi-pronged approach, both on- and offline.

Learning with our grantees at country level

Alongside grant-making, Voice's main goal is to link programme stakeholders and learn across countries, organisations and thematic areas. To enable this, each Voice country team opened a specific Call for Proposals available to CSOs and social enterprises interested in facilitating national level linking and learning activities. Amongst those organisations that have been contracted are social enterprises, media groups, and others specialised in facilitating learning. As a result, we are extending our Linking and Learning team with amazing partners covering specialities

like participatory video making, behavioural science, youth engagement, co-creating and co-working and a lot of storytelling capacity. We are excited to start working in this new and extended community of linkers and learners. This group is enabling the Voice target groups, grantees, and other stakeholders to connect, to share, to explore, to test and to be inclusive in all that we do. Ways of co-creating, exploring, testing, reflecting and bringing it all together back to the programme cycle have been wonderfully summarised in our recently published blog that unpacks the "Building blocks of Linking and Learning"

Learning with our grantees at the global level

To mark the closure of the first Learning from Innovation multi-country projects, Voice facilitated the first annual learning event: the Inclusion Innovation Indaba held in January 2018. The I-Cube was organised in the form of an "unconference": a semi-structed series of workshops aiming to create an open space where grantees and other stakeholders could freely exchange experiences, lessons learned, successes, and challenges. Ten different testimonials from a sample of grantees and other indaba participants shaped an overall

positive impression. Participants confirmed that:

- 1 There was space for all: All themes and groups were able to present and discuss what they were bringing or what came up on the spot, like a debate on LGBTI.
- 2 The unconference enabled people to come out of their silos and think across themes and target groups.
- 3 There was a lot of trust from all sides, and flexibility. Therefore, it was possible to immediately respond to the suggestions to set and change the agenda before and to vote for the top 4 who would be presenting without a feeling that people were left out.
- 4 It was highlighted that despite being a heterogenous group, that what unites us is much greater than what divides us.
- 5 Voice is taking steady steps towards amplifying a collective story on exclusion and inclusion.

Particularly valued elements, were:

- The process of practicing deep listening the power of listening
- Showing interest in individuals
- Looking for commonalities/similarities, connecting with peers
- Sharing personal stories, where the storyteller decides what is shared and how
- Even with the greatest legislation and laws supporting LGBTI more work must be done at the grassroots level to change attitudes, behaviours and norms to achieve the change we are aiming for.

"A person from a deprived environment would say, 'there's no opportunity'. But in reality, there would always be opportunities along the way. The youth, themselves, are the capital, and their environment is their opportunity."

Voice grantee, quoted during the annual learning indaba

"inclusivity is not something natural because it is not MY lived experience. This mentality poses a challenge in the attitude of people without disability towards People with Disabilities"

Voice grantee, quoted during the annual learning indaba

Distilled lessons surfaced during the Indaba have been nicely summarised by our grantees in an inspiring blog post.

Learning to do things differently

In 2017 the Linking and Learning teams worked on two internal learning processes: capacity strengthening on inclusive facilitation and ways of working, and "how to" organise a different, exciting learning event that takes participants out of their comfort zones learning to do things differently.

It is easy to say that we work inclusively. But looking more closely and in conversation with different persons from marginalised groups, Voice learnt that we can and should do better. To give this some impetus, a series of regional capacity strengthening workshops on inclusive facilitation and ways of working were organised in Laos, Kenya and Niger. The sessions were facilitated by a mixed Voice and Light for the World facilitation team.

Participants learned about ACAP, four key principles of inclusion: Attitude, Communication, Accessibility and Participation, placing particular emphasis on the Attitude: with the right attitude, one is open and willing and flexible and other aspects of inclusion will improve as well. This is because one's perspective and way of looking at inclusion will have changed.

Now, the challenge is around making inclusion work in our communication and interaction with Voice grantees, members of the Voice target groups as well as other stakeholders. The Indaba proved to be a useful exercise in this practice which we need to extend in all our work in 2018.

Learning though the Voice web platform

In the first Inclusion Innovation Indaba and through storytelling on the Voice website, grantees and stakeholders are encouraged to jointly explore, test and scale innovative approaches and new knowledge. Voice does take learning seriously, which at the end of 2017 led to the unusual move to explicitly change grant criteria and processes, based on the feedback of (turned down) grant-

Voice published 12 blog posts written by staff members and grantees, sharing experiences and lessons learnt around outreach, project management, grant-making, influencing, capacity strengthening and linking and learning. Through social media and webpage postings on topics ranging from ending illegitimate practices on child marriage, supporting women's leadership, improving access to social services for the elderly, practicing inclusion, reaching out to unusual suspects, Voice has engaged with 3771 people via the Voice-Mail Monthly Newsletter, Facebook and Twitter. The Voice website has reached 290,814 views and 45.181 unique visitors in 2017.

WHERE WE GOT TO

CAPACITY STRENGTHENING OUTCOMES - HIGHLIGHTS



Empowering informal groups through building safe spaces, creating confidence and building skills

A full picture of outcome-level results linked to the empowerment pathway is not yet available. Empowerment grantees have not yet reached the level of project maturity that would yield useful insights how informal groups have presented collective demands to external stakeholders.

To date, interim grantee narrative reports and stories submitted in video

format, indicate that 37 informal groups have used safe spaces to convene and work, which amounts to 30% of the total number of organisations supported by Voice. An interesting finding is that across all grant types empowerment components are a strong integrated component, while originally this was only meant for empowerment grants. Qualitative data collected by Empowerment and Innovate & Learn grantees through participatory video research indicated that 6 groups of youth and LGBTI people have increased confidence to raise their voice.

At the output level, programme staff and grantees have facilitated the development of an agenda of change by marginalised and discriminated groups.

Change agendas are for now mostly centred around brokering knowledge amongst different stakeholders, raising awareness at the individual and group level around issues faced by marginalised and discriminated groups, enabling them to feel more confident to voice their concerns to the public. In some cases (YADEN in Kenya and STELLA in Laos), agendas for change

were about young people's small business development plans: becoming financially independent and working on creating a sustainable livelihood, was identified as the most appropriate route to break out of stigmatisation and isolation.

Strengthening the capacity of (informal) groups, organisations and networks to build alliances and networks with a variety of stakeholders, to amplify the voice of marginalised and discriminated groups.

Ten alliances in Mali and Uganda have already indicated to initiate activities based on joint agendas; 16 publications supportive to groups and their agenda.

From a representative sample of six different six-month reports from influencing grantees in Uganda, the following important components that strengthened informal groups' capacity to build effective alliances to amplify their demands:

- Engagement with the National Youth Council Act and participation of youth and women in roundtable discussions on Land Act/Policy
- An open dialogue with the Ministry of Energy on artisanal mining and land eviction, recognition and protection
- Media campaigning broadcasted via TV and radio stations on mining policies
- Strengthening women groups and linking them with available funding opportunities
- Supporting radio interactive platform discussions on land access for women
- Facilitating dialogues between the Quality Health Service Delivery, Education and pastoralist local com-

- munities (in Ntoroko and Kasese districts)
- Supporting the Ministry of Education to engage with representatives
 of people with disabilities on special needs-based financing
- Supporting women and youth on social media campaigning and participation to feedback sessions
- Supporting informal groups of women and youth in drafting position papers on livelihood projects.

By being able to amplify their demands:

- Women groups involved in artisan and mining work are now better equipped to advocate for recognition, protection, and registration by governments
- Youth groups are taking a lead in "Youth Parliament" organised locally by Nation Media TV and amplified through Voice social media and website.
- Women groups are more informed around accessing government funds for their local livelihood projects, hence able to demand and engage with the government on available support
- Youth groups are more informed about livelihood projects and begin to access government funds with full awareness of their responsibilities and duties toward the government.

121 informal groups, organisations and networks have reported strengthening their capacity by using a range of tools and instruments to influence decision makers

Given that the national influencing grantees are in early project implementation, outcome-level results are still moderate. Highlights of the use of influencing tools and instruments include:

- Using personal stories as a soft-lobby instrument, to advocate for minority rights in Uganda, Tanzania and Laos.
- Using community mobilisation through grassroots meetings with women, youth, elderly and groups of people with disabilities to raise awareness and improve access to information around land rights in Uganda.
- Using strategic litigation to advocate for indigenous people's access to natural resources in Niger, Uganda, Kenya and Tanzania.
- Strengthening engagement of indigenous people and ethnic minorities in multi-stakeholder initiatives resulted to having them included in decision making in the Philippines and Nigeria.
- Using performing arts to engage with health providers for improved and increased access to services of LGBTI youth in Laos.
- Using a photo exhibition to make steps towards changing community norms and behaviours towards LGBTI couples in Cambodia.
- · Using locally led petitions to advocate for ending child marriage in Tanzania: The girls' rights organisation Msichana, one of Tanzania's influencing grantees, recently won a landmark legal case to raise the minimum age of marriage for girls to 18 (equal to boys). Now, Msichana advocates to get this High Court ruling enforced; the government refuses to change the law accordingly. With the Voice project, Msichana translated the juridical language into accessible information, so that everyone can understand what the ruling means.

WHERE WE GOTTO

LINKING AND LEARNING **OUTCOMES - HIGHLIGHTS**

Marginalised groups, CSOs and other key stakeholders are developing and implementing innovative and effective strategies to reach, empower and strengthen influencing capacities of marginalised and discriminated groups.

Grantee milestone and monitoring visit reports reviewed, showed that 21 organisations and the groups under their umbrella, reported the use and effects of new insights and innovative approaches in their work.

At the output level:

- 8 Innovate & Learn organisations developed and advanced on the implementation of a learning agenda
- 3 Communities of Practice have been facilitated partly by Voice

grantees and partly by Voice teams, exchanging practices around:

- Data visualisation and use for grassroots activism: 1 meeting resulted in 1 publication through an online platform created to allow members of this community to share their experiences.
- Inclusive facilitation and ways of working. 3 regional workshops resulted to one publication in English, also translated in French
- Using performing arts to influence local government authorities. 5 learning meetings were facilitated by the CoP in this domain, resulted to 2 video publications.

Voice is enabling stakeholders at country and global levels to access and use an evidence base on innovative and effective strategies to reach, empower, amplify, and influence. 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 programme; 70 percent of Voice grantees report use of the L&L infrastructure;

Progress against this outcome will be reported in more detail next year when projects will be further in implementation. Linking and Learning organisations will soon start working with the grantees in all countries. As per the work plans, several processes are enhanced: finalising the establishment

of a fully fleshed linking and learning infrastructure, connecting all grantees to a country level as well as global network and (online) platform, creating opportunities to bring grantees and other stakeholders together, and the gathering and sharing of insights and innovative and creative solutions and strategies.

Nevertheless, we already notice a different dynamism and connecting among grantees and among grantees and the Voice team following linking and learning activities.

New ideas & approaches have been prototyped, tested, and evaluated, ready for scale, shared and potentially adopted by relevant stakeholders

8 innovative approaches implemented by global Innovate & Learn grantees





A detailed analysis of potential risks and a global mitigation strategy developed during the global Voice co-creation workshop in June 2016, remained relevant throughout 2017. Here we like to highlight three mutually re-enforcing risks related to programme implementation and the wider context. One of the key risks is the lack of civic space for which we use the Civicus Civic Space Monitor and Rating.

CIVICUS CIVIC SPACE RATING

OBSTRUCTED

INDONESIA, PHILIPPINES, KENYA, TANZANIA, MALI, NIGER, NIGERIA

REPRESSED

CAMBODIA, UGANDA

CLOSED

LAOS

For a full explanation of the ratings; see https://monitor.civicus.org/

@2017 IDAHOT: Its

Comm

Liked

A severe crack down on civic space, manifested through attacks against social media outlets and additional operational restrictions for local civil society organisations.

Three out of ten Voice focus countries reported a precarious state of political affairs, which poses additional challenges to working with the most marginalised and discriminated groups. In Cambodia, for example, the opposition party was dissolved by the government and some independent media were shut down; the upcoming national elections on the 29th of July 2018 could impact civic space even further and consequently, project implementation by Voice grantees. Strategic planning involving Voice country team, Oxfam country management in Cambodia and the Voice coordination team took place throughout the last two quarters of 2017, aiming to find creative, alternative routes to enable groups to voice up their concerns by placing more focus on art and culture.

changing political context at the level of state governance and a new draft NGO bill, rendering implementation of certain projects s either difficult or impossible. An example is the Lagos state government's refusal to endorse the "Breaking All Barriers Project" implementation throughout stateowned schools. Mitigation measures included amplifying linking events to stimulate knowledge exchange and learning amongst project participants from all districts. While in neighbour-

Similarly, Nigeria shows signs of a

ing Niger a systematic crackdown to organise peaceful demonstrations has led to a limiting set of influencing tools used by local civil society groups.

Broader mitigation measures entailed launching Sudden Opportunity grants with less stringent requirements.

Difficulties reaching informal groups and limited political space for their demands

Despite intensive outreach efforts, difficulties in identifying and potentially funding informal groups that are not linked to local CSOs networks (community-based groups, young unregistered organisations and networks) remained a challenge. By thoroughly mapping out informal CSO networks (especially disability-oriented informal groups) and organising individual ("Portes Ouvertes") as well as joint information sessions with other Oxfam programmes, ensured that the Voice team in Mali reached out to more unusual suspects, such as a young group of slammers working with youth with intellectual disabilities.

Using digital media to connect and influence for change has proven to be both a blessing and a curse. Internet is exponentially expanding, thanks to high mobile penetration and spread. In East Africa, especially Tanzania, mobile phones are now major tools for citizens' access to the internet providing open spaces to express themselves and seek social justice. However, despite the positive trends, technology-assisted violence against

women and minority groups are on the rise. The government in Tanzania is using technology for mass/indiscriminate surveillance ignoring privacy rights.

Public backlash against specific segments of civil society, particularly the LGBTI community and ethnic minorities is expected to continue as a means for the current government to establish its "legitimacy". Building resilience through legal protection is a safe way to avoid arbitrary intrusion by the state - such legal protection should be made available to discriminated groups to help limit violation of their rights.

Human resources related risks

Ensuring adequate human resource capacity remains a challenge: High staff turn-over, combined with an increased workload have impacted efficiency and institutional memory in the vast majority of countries.

Country teams have monitored and revised their national risk management strategies alongside a global risk analysis monitored by the coordination team and Advisory Board. At the project level, grantees are required to systematically report and mitigate on risks related to the external context as well the operational environment, through a dedicated section in the milestone reporting templates. Grantee-level risks are identified collaboratively by the country team and a tailor-made monitoring plan is devised based on the risk categorisation.

SPENT

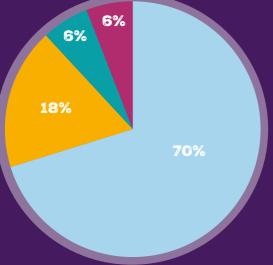
VOICE IS A FIVE-YEAR FUND (2016-2021) TOTALLING EURO 50 MILLION, THUS FAR FUNDED EXCLUSIVELY BY THE NETHERLANDS MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS.

OVERALL THE TOTAL BUDGET IS **BROKEN DOWN IN** THE FOLLOWING **COMPONENTS:**

Voice is a so-called public service contract which has strict requirements for implementation of the grant facility and the programme management and linking and learning component. As a contractor the consortium needs to apply VAT and hence provision has been made for this.

The data and numbers in this section are a summary from the unqualified audit report 2017, which is available on the website and on request.





GRANTS

35 million Euro grant fund, for grants to (local) organisations of marginalised and discriminated groups

MANAGEMENT, ADMINISTRATION AND **CAPACITY STRENGTHENING**

9 million Euro for Programme Management and Administration and capacity strengthening in the Voice countries

LINKING AND LEARNING

3 million Euro is set aside to Linking and Learning strongly focused on south-south

3 million Euro is reserved for VAT

VOICE OVERALL BUDGET AND REPORTING

Overall expenditure in 2017	
Grant Allocation	€9.909.351
Programme Management and Administration	€1.595.202
Linking and Learning	€476.634
VAT	€435.086
Total 2017	€12.416.273

	Operational Budget 2017	Cumulatative expenses 2017	Variance Budget versus Actuals	% spent (budget depletion)
A. Management and administration				
Context, gender and actor analyses	€66.926	€52.821	-€14.106	79%
Planning, monitoring, evaluation and reporting	€1.012.549	€726.022	-€286.527	72%
Administration (including of the subsidy facility)	€815.812	€725.670	-€90.143	89%
Advisory board	€10.100	€6.451	-€3.649	64%
B. Linking and learning process				
Linking and learning process	€724.835	€476.634	-€248.201	66%
C. Communication and promotion of the fun	d			
Other deliverables	€100.129	€84.238	-€15.891	84%
Sub-total Management and Administration and Other deliverables	€2.005.516	€1.595.202	-€410.315	80%
Sub-total Linking and learning process	€724.835	€476.634	-€248.201	66%
Contingencies (5%)	€136.518	€0	-€136.518	0%
Total 2017	€2.866.869	€2.071.834	-€795.033	72%
VAT / 21%	€602.042	€435.086	-€166.956	72%
Total 2017	€3.468.911	€2.506.920	-€961.989	72%

Note: Small discrepancies in overview are caused by rounding differences.

MONETARY ALLOCATION PER GRANT TYPE

	2017	2017 - 2021
	Amount approvals	Total Budget
Empowerment	€338.719	€4.900.000
Influencing	€7.741.410	€16.100.000
Innovate and learn	€1.817.272	€9.100.000
Sudden Opportunity	€11.958	€4.900.000
Grand Total	€9.909.361	€35.000.000

