



Connecting Voice(s)

Voice Nigeria

Linking & 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 targets five groups, although it depends on the country's context analysis which groups will be served in each Voice focus country²:

- 1) People living with disabilities;
- 2) Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI) people;
- 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 strengthen their lobby and advocacy capacity 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 (2016-2020), for which a total of €50 million is available for programme-, grants-, management- and linking and learning costs. A total of €35 million is available for grants.

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 the Voice target groups. The fund management agent

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

² The Voice focus countries are: Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, Indonesia, Philippines, Laos and Cambodia.



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should 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 Voice target groups 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:

TARGETED OUTCOME 2.1 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
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
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
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.
TARGETED OUTCOME 2.2 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
Output 2.2.1 Voice will enable the constant sharing of insights, ideas, and evidence through the knowledge sharing facility (online & offline)
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
TARGETED OUTCOME 2.3: New ideas & approaches have been prototyped, tested and evaluated, ready for scale, shared and potentially adopted by relevant stakeholders



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Output 2.3.1: Voice has allocated grants to prototype and test promising ideas and approaches

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. Voice Nigeria will nevertheless work with the short-listed candidate to ensure that these targeted outcomes are achieved in line with the country context.

1.3 Reason behind this Call for Proposals

As part of the Voice 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.

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. In safe and inclusive spaces where people can speak up and leave with new ideas. However, even in linking and learning, multi-stakeholder processes, exchanges, communities of practice and action research, communities from target groups often have other people participate on ‘their’ behalf. The Voice Programme is therefore 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, to explore empowerment and influencing approaches and to enhance the grantees’ capacity to be inclusive. 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 for areas that have little or no internet access. Communities in remote rural areas, indigenous groups, and other disenfranchised groups alienated from the information society will be able to learn as well as generate new knowledge.



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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, and 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.

Connecting Voices' 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 the Voice country team to achieve the under-listed deliverables. During negotiation stage of the contract, Voice team and the shortlisted applicant will discuss in more details these deliverables and any other innovative idea that might come up at that stage, to strengthen the contract. Key tasks and deliverables expected from the contract:

- Connect all Voice grantees in a country-wide or multi-country network or platform;
- Bring grantees, members of the target groups and other stakeholders together around learning questions and change agendas. The latter is prioritised jointly during the context analysis, communities of stakeholders and the granting, based on their voices;
- Explore and test participatory, creative, and transformative approaches and methodologies to maximise participation and inclusion;
- Produce internal and external publications on lessons learnt, using a variety of media and audiences;
- Express informed opinions on a range of development issues to the public;



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- Present information and data to others in a creative and engaging way using a variety of artistic forms and ICT;
- Facilitate and/strengthen Voice community of practice and participate actively in this community of practice;
- Whatever products and processes delivered, will foster attitudes of respect, understanding and empathy towards marginalised and discriminated people/individuals;
- The Voice team will select members of Communities of Practice, individual grantees or stakeholders, to participate in the Voice Global Annual Learning Event or other relevant Voice events outside the country. The applicant will support selected grantees / target groups members in preparation for their participation in the (global) learning event; for instance, support to access and analyze available data, to prepare a paper, a presentation or intervention using multi media. Further, the applicant will make sure the learning is taken back to the grantees and stakeholders.
- Equally, the applicant will be gathering inputs at country level to contribute to global learning event and/or other communities of practice.
- Similar support will be given to the participation of country level grantees in cross-country communities of practice;

The above will be detailed further by the applicant by adapting it to the country context. We invite the applicants to be as innovative and creative as possible considering the local context.

2.2 Key principles and instruments

Leave No One Behind - No person – regardless of ethnicity, gender, geography, disability, sexual orientation, race, 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 disability. 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,

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.



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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 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.

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

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, who will also monitor implementation and be responsible for quality management. Following this Call for Proposal the 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 Project Coordinator.

3.2 Monitoring and Evaluation

The Innovation and Learning component is one of the two outcome areas of Voice in the Voice framework. Monitoring and evaluation of the outputs and outcomes of this project will need to be aligned with the overall Voice monitoring and evaluation practice and contribute with quantitative and qualitative data gathering through stories of change, outcome harvesting (only for the influencing grants), participatory videos or theatre, event reporting and like.

3.3 Reporting and publications

A reporting schedule will be agreed upon, based on agreed milestones and 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 (at least by 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 have to take into account the Voice branding guidelines and use of a Creative Commons Licence to allow the broadest distribution possible. 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.



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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.

Pending on interest and final discussions in The Hague we may need to maintain the following budgetary requirement: The applicant organisation must demonstrate that the proposed budget derives no more than 40% of the total annual income of the organisation. (How to calculate: $\text{proposed budget} / (\text{total annual income} + \text{proposed budget}) * 100\%$). But for now we encourage all eligible organisations to apply regardless of financial capacity.

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 has strong experience in reporting and developing thought-provoking publications where information and data are presented in creative and engaging ways. They must be adept in using a variety of artistic forms and ICT in order to reach a variety of audiences. They must be able to 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 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 or Hivos before, the applicant organisation must have a clean financial record.

What kind of skills are we looking for?

The applicant needs to promote spaces, where different grantees learn from each other, by using approaches that are creative, inclusive and encourage transformative change.

The applicant needs to have expertise in / familiar with publications and/or networks to promote the work of discriminated or marginalized voices.



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The applicant needs to define a work plan or strategy of how the different members of communities of practice and stakeholders will be collaborating. This work plan should include:

- the proposed tools/channels of communication to be used among the groups
- The audience to be reached out
- The meetings/ learning events frequency
- The different learning agendas

This work plan will be evaluated periodically and can also be adjusted/modified according to the activities' milestones

4 Financial arrangements

4.1 Available Budget

The maximum budget is Euro 200,000.00 for 24 months.

The applicant is expected to submit a 'Euro' budget that covers all activities in the proposal- costs associated with organising events including but not limited to costs for participation etc.

Things/ items to probably be considered in the budget:

- Periodic/annual meetings/ with target groups/stakeholders/community of practice. These can be held at national/ subnational level whatever is most appropriate in the Nigerian context.
- 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's coverage/
- Other MEAL and communication activities (data collection, story gathering, baselines, end lines, etc.)

4.2 Due diligence, audit and compliance

The allocation of grants will start with the opening of funding windows or call for proposals from potential grantees. Before a grant is considered, a Partner Quick Assessment (PQA) is made to create a Financial Risk Inventory, check basic due diligence requirements, and assess the potential grantee's expertise and



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strategy and fit with the goals of the VOICE programme. Financial reasons for a no-go could for instance be suspicion of fraud, lack of basic financial procedures, or lack of solvency.

If the PQA is positive, a comprehensive risk assessment is made on institutional, organisational, financial and programmatic risks. The assessment includes (but is not limited to) due diligence themes on governance, structures and procedures, financial position and financial accounting systems, procurement and accountability (externally audited accounts), HR, corruption and fraud procedures and standards. This assessment results in an overall “go” or “no go”, plus a clear risk register and identification of steps forward.

For Grants over €100,000, the Grantee is responsible for ensuring that an independent and complete financial audit is undertaken at the end of the project with detailed project annual accounts (for multi-year projects). The financial audit may be Voice project specific or an audit of the organization as a whole, provided that an organizational financial audit report provides annual income and expenditures per donor.

If a positive advice for funding results, a legal contract between parties is signed, including agreements on disbursement schedule, reporting guidelines, reporting schedule and formats, grievance procedures, audit requirements, etc. Financial and organisational risks identified in the organisational assessments will be translated into a capacity strengthening plan that is part of the agreement with grantees. This means that a part of the grant can be used to mitigate particular risks and strengthen capacities.

5 Duration

This contract will be funded by the Innovate and Learn Grant window which has a maximum duration of 24 months. Interventions under this contract is therefore expected not to exceed this period.

6 Application procedure

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 on 15 AUGUST 2017 at 17.00 (Abuja time) the latest.

The application process has the following schedule:



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- Call for Proposals: 31 JULY – 15 AUGUST 2017
- Assessment: 16 AUGUST– 5 SEPTEMBER 2017
- Announcement: 10 SEPTEMBER 2017

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.

7 Standardising terms

Voice elaborated a list of standardising terms in use in the programme. Please read this carefully before applying <https://oxfam.app.box.com/v/Standardisedterms>

