

**RECOMMENDED
GUIDELINES FOR THE
VOICE LINKING &
LEARNING PROGRAMME
IN NIGERIA**

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Background

Voice is an innovative grant facility to support rightsholders and groups facing marginalization and discrimination in their efforts to exert influence in accessing productive and social services, and political participation. Voice operates in contexts where civic space and power is shifting at a fast pace, and often closing rather than opening. It aims to amplify and connect the previously unknown voices in order to leave no one behind.

The Linking & Learning component of Voice Programme

Voice Linking & Learning component refers to planned activities, processes that boost collaboration, connection, sharing of learnings, innovation, and application of new knowledge for project implementation delivery effectiveness of participating grantees to achieve their project trajectories. It aims to produce evidence-based learning and innovative solutions to project implementation challenges for the current and future engagements of grantees for better transformative change effects on targeted, marginalized and discriminated rightsholders.

Objectives of the Linking & Learning Programme Component

The Linking & Learning Programme component enables sharing of experiences and lessons from (innovative) initiatives, allowing for the scaling up of successful projects. The objectives are:

- To develop a mutual learning process fostering intersectional approaches where the exchange of knowledge, experiences and lessons learned take place among grantees, contributing to an inclusive change among the Voice rightsholder groups.
- To ensure local ownership of the learning agenda through a natural and intrinsic process wherein the needs, existing knowledge, expectations and questions of Voice rightsholder groups are put at the centre.
- To enable a space for review, reflection, and re-strategizing throughout the grantees' learning journey, emphasizing on the processes and the way forward.
- To design a sustainable Linking and Learning process beyond the official duration of Voice.

Purpose of the Guideline

The purpose of this document is to clearly recommend a Linking and Learning process that is grantee-centered, based on past and current participating grantee experiences, and their expected roles as well as that of the Linking & Learning Facilitators, and the Voice Nigeria Team to ensure the objectives of the Linking & Learning component are achieved.

Guidelines

Types of Voice Grantee

The Voice programme funds four types of grants, namely:



Empowerment grant



Influencing grant



Innovate and Learn grant



Sudden Opportunity grant

A Voice grantee is a formal organization or informal group that is implementing a Voice-funded grant.

The Role Of a Voice Grantee

Linking and Learning is grantee-centred and grantees are expected to:



Integrate safe spaces for interaction with other grantees into their planned activities to reflect on project implementation experiences and learning new better ways of delivering values to their rightsholders. These can be done through meetings to listen, learn, exchange stories and strategies to enhance mutual learning.



Formulate learning questions to keep track of their learning journey during the grant period.







Identify areas of common interests and take the initiative to lead opportunities for collaboration and knowledge sharing (e.g. peer-to-peer knowledge exchange, communities of practice).



Participate actively in co-creating the agendas and activities for Linking and Learning events.

Grantee-to-Grantee Engagement

The Voice programme expect grantees to engage with each other through:

-  Physical linking & learning events (Linking & Learning workshop, peer-to-peer, knowledge exchange visits, communities of practice).
-  Online platforms (virtual Linking & Learning sessions, WhatsApp, online communication and collaboration platforms).
-  Field visits to participate and learn from other grantees' project activities where necessary. This should happen organically).
-  Collaboration based on their areas of strength, weaknesses, project similarities and shared learning interest or influencing goals.

The Linking & Learning Facilitator

The Linking & Learning Facilitator is responsible for the coordination of Voice Linking and Learning activities in Nigeria while working closely with the Voice Nigeria Linking, Learning & Amplifier Officer.

The Roles of the Linking & Learning Facilitator

The Linking & Learning Facilitator is expected to:

- Facilitate or support grantees' meetings, sharing, listening, learning platforms for all Voice grantees (and other stakeholders) to participate in annual Linking and Learning events, communities of practice, communities of stakeholders, through online and/or face-to-face mediums.
- Support grantee with an easy to use tech solution that makes learning seamless.
- Create an accessible online dashboard to document learning among the different grantees for easy referencing.
- Work with grantees to facilitate the identification of skill gaps, strengths and new knowledge among grantees and create supporting platforms for mutual capacity learning and acquisition.
- Create a mentorship platform on project story-telling, interpersonal skill development, games and leisure activities that aids learning and team building where necessary.
- Facilitate connection to the rest of Voice, to exchange with other countries and have grantees' stories, and successful influencing shared across.

The Expertise of the Linking & Learning Facilitator

The Linking & Learning Facilitators must possess the following expertise:

- Expertise in knowledge management.
- The organization should possess expertise in training and capacity strengthening.
- The organization should have expertise in the design of innovative learning approaches.
- The organization should possess in depth knowledge and understanding of issues confronting rightholders.
- The organization should possess good communication strategies.
- The organization should have vast experience and expertise in the development sector, human resource and knowledge management.
- The organization should have the skills to mediate among grantees and have respect for the vision and missions of the different grantees.

The Voice Nigeria Team

The Voice Nigeria Team coordinates the Voice programme in Nigeria.

The Role of the Voice Nigeria Team

The Voice Nigeria Team is expected to:

- Work closely as the Linking & Learning Amplification Officer with the Linking & Learning Facilitator to coordinate all Linking & Learning planned activities. Guide grantees on adequate budgetary allocations for active participation in linking & learning activities.
- Provide a brief explanation and a column on Linking and Learning planning alongside learning questions as a prospective grantee using calls for proposals development.

The Linking, Learning and Amplifier Officer will also connect the national Linking & Learning and grantee stories and successes to the amplification processes and global learning events across Voice.

Identify grantees' organizational gaps through assessments, and also strengthen their capacities in those identified areas. Some of the gaps identified will be addressed through the grant, such as financial and project management, and not through the linking and learning.

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