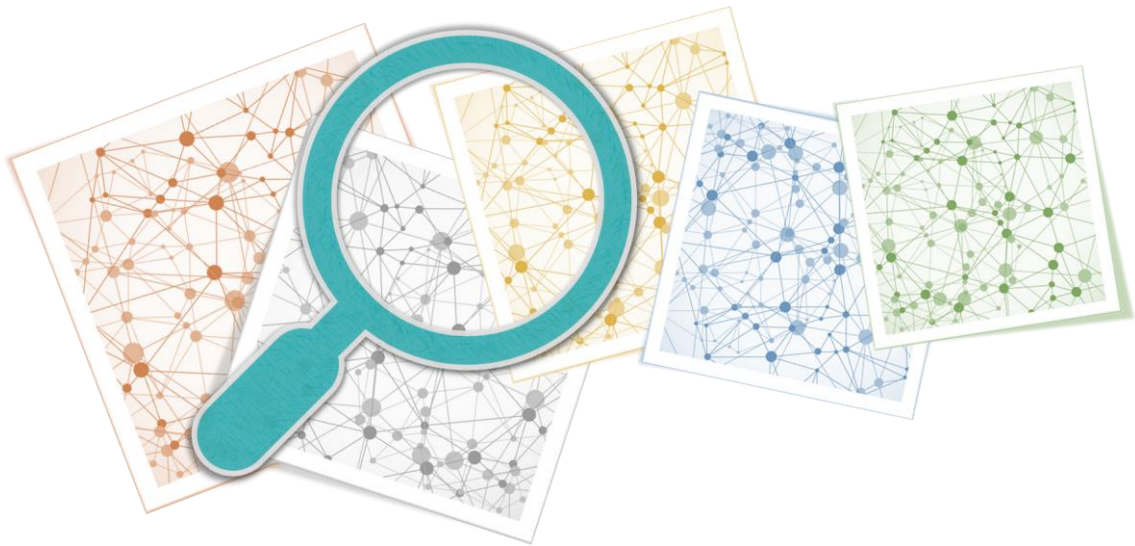




VOICE GLOBAL PERCEPTION BRIEF 2022-23



MAY 2023

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1. INTRODUCTION

Towards the end of 2022, the Voice Global Coordination Team initiated three activities to collect and reflect on feedback around the implementation of the programme:

- An online discussion was conducted by the coordination team in December 2022 based on the questions “What are the glimmers of hope in 2022 that make you positive about 2023?” and “What do you wish to see in our (coordination) team next year?”.
- An online survey was prepared and then sent to the ten Voice country teams in January 2023. The survey was based on the questions “What successes and challenges do you see in the different and intersectional rightsholder groups’ efforts to promote change in your country, context?”, “Do you think Voice processes enable and/or hinder the different grantee partners and rightsholders to implement their projects as well as to link and learn together?”, and “We still have more than a year to create a conducive environment for the grantee partners to continue their efforts. What can we do to facilitate this?”.
- A survey was designed in English and French to collect feedback from grantee partners on their experiences with the programme in 2022. This survey aimed to generate insights that help to improve understanding and collaboration between all grantee partners and Voice. Responses were submitted in January and February 2023.

After analysing responses to the three activities to collect and reflect on feedback around the implementation of the programme, the two Voice Monitoring and Evaluation officers of Voice produced the perception brief as basis for reflections in meetings throughout the first half of 2023 and especially during the annual Voice Meet in June 2023.

A summary presentation of this report, serving as an executive summary, was presented during the Voice Meet 2023 and later shared by the coordination team with the county teams.

2. AN ONLINE DISCUSSION BY THE COORDINATION TEAM

An online discussion was conducted by the coordination team in December 2022. Based on this discussion focussing on two key questions, the responses of the coordination team members are summarised below.

What are the glimmers of hope in 2022 that make you positive about 2023?

- We saw more openness about workload: An aware and coordinated way of working of some sub-teams that are an inspiration for the rest of us. Increased interest of country teams to take the lead in some strategic engagements and regional collaborations.
- We saw the testing of different spaces and platforms for improving coordination, shared decision-making and learning: This includes growing awareness and positive feedback in terms of improving the sharing on content, information flows and knowledge management. Knowledge Sharing Meetings have been established and we are starting to systematise them.
- We saw intersectional spaces where all rightsholder groups engage respectfully: However, this is only sometimes the case and not everywhere. We like to see more tolerance and welcoming attitudes towards criminalised communities.

What do you wish to see in our (coordination) team next year?

- More focus on work/life balance and wellbeing: Various actions proposed to achieve this, including buddy system, off days, wellbeing events, etc.
- Enhanced flow of data, information and knowledge: Suggestion to have a small group set up in Q1, 2023 to bring forward an approach for a meta-analysis linking what Voice is and what it wants to be with what Voice's impact is. Bring impact of grantee partners and of Voice as a program alive, not only during events.
- Strengthen ways of working and management: Tremendous work done on improving the Process Manual. However, need to make the manual useful in practice for the country teams.
- Active engagement of all team members in various actions: Realise full potential of what we already do, such as the Knowledge Sharing Meetings.

3. AN ONLINE SURVEY WITH COUNTRY TEAMS

In January 2023, an online survey based on three key questions was sent to the ten Voice country teams. The first question focussed on the successes and challenges seen by Voice teams in the different and intersectional rightsholder groups' efforts to promote change (see Table 1 and 2), the second question focussed on the enabling and hindering factors in the different grantee partners' and rightsholders' efforts to implement their projects as well as to link and learn together (see Table 3), and the third question focussed on how Voice can create a conducive environment for the grantee partners to continue their efforts in 2023 (see Table 4). Based on a total of 13 submitted forms, the responses of the Voice country team members were categorised and are summarised below.

What successes and challenges do you see in the different and intersectional rightsholder groups' efforts to promote change in your country, context?

Successes mentioned by the country team members can be divided into two broad categories. The first category focuses on the co-creation approach that Voice uses to engage with grantee partners helping to bring inclusion and intersectionality to the top of grantee partners' agendas when reaching out and working with rightsholders. In one case, it was even mentioned that these efforts also had linked back to other Oxfam programmes in the country. The second category focuses on the support that grantee partners provide with their Voice projects to rightsholders, helping them to find their voices and to speak up. These responses indicate that grantee partners seem to make progress towards the goal of Voice ("Empowered rightsholders are able to express their views and demand their rights for responsive and inclusive societies.").

	Responses:
Voice co-created with grantee partners to reach out to rightsholders and promote inclusion and intersectionality.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — While there is shrinking civic space that also limits how movements are formed, Voice's way of working is co-creative, such as call for proposals being determined based on issues faced by rightsholders. — Voice has been successful in connecting with various rightsholder groups and communities of practice, creating a diverse profile. Through their connection to Voice, they are motivated to work together to promote intersectionality. — Managed to reach all rightsholder groups using innovative and diverse approaches with intersectionality lens and inclusion as the main criteria. — Through a join learning exchange and community of practice on promoting inclusion for all in water governance, we built synergy with other Oxfam initiative.
Grantee partners supported rightsholders to find their voices and to speak up.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — There is a lot of action undertaken by rightsholders themselves, especially in terms of advocacy with the authorities. — Grantee partners registered many achievements that have culminated in stories of change, sharing approaches of work, and building synergies around collective advocacy. — Published a newsletter about gender champions, with rightsholders sharing their stories about how they have been in position to fight gender-based violence. — The rightsholders are involved in promoting their own empowerment processes, finding their voices, and helping others to find theirs. — The success I see with rights holder groups is that they become aware of their right and take action to claim their right from authorities and have gained self-esteem and self-confidence.

Table 1. Successes seen by Voice in rightsholder groups' efforts to promote change.

The country team members’ responses also indicate a broad range of challenges that include contextual challenges (reacting to contextual changes), strategic challenges (reaching all rightsholder groups and building partner networks), and operational challenges (enabling joint action, providing enough funding and time, and strengthening capacities).

	Responses:
Voice facing challenges to reach all rightsholder groups through its grantee partners.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — There are many intersections and connections across movements, but LGBTI groups are still side-lined and there is less coordination among CSOs and more fear about speaking out on issues such as LGBTI rights. — Some marginalized groups have not been reached out to much, including the intersex community, migrant workers who have experienced gender-based violence, vulnerable youth at risk of radicalization and fundamentalism, and others. —
Grantee partners facing challenges to enable joint action among rightsholders.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Challenge in the sharing of safe spaces between different rightsholders. — Challenges in accepting the sharing of safe spaces when it comes to starting to work with sexual minorities. — There is more intersectionality between groups of rightsholders, but actions remain individual and isolated, so must explore the creation of synergies. — The challenges are that there are many activities that rightsholder organisations do but it is not uniform as each conducts their advocacy to rate. — To create a good environment for all different rightsholders groups together can be a challenge in some countries, so there is a need for trust building and start Linking and Learning within the grantee partner group before opening it up to participation by other actors. — More Linking and Learning activities that include rightsholders, grantees and Voice team. —
Voice facing challenges to strengthen capacities of grantee partners.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — We must acknowledge the limited capacity of some small and informal groups on project management, their financial capacity and language barriers. Voice must invest more time and resources to accommodate their needs of inclusion, provide more capacity strengthening and promote learning exchange among grantee partners through Linking and Learning platform. — We must be together more time with grantee partners to support them to develop their own ways of working, to see the potential of working together and being open to change, and to do things differently. —
Voice facing challenges to build and strengthen partnerships with external actors.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — While Voice has built relationships with external, strategic partners, we need to be more proactive and intentional in building and strengthening partnerships. —
Grantee partners facing challenges to claim their rights from government representatives.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — The context analysis highlighted visible and invisible power affecting rightsholders, with the lack of political will to implement laws and policies to ensure rights protection being a key challenge. — New government is overly religious, which is having a negative impact on the rights of LGBTI persons and there have been cases of violence against them. —
Voice facing challenges to provide enough funding and time to grantee partners’ initiatives.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Biggest challenge now is on resources itself, as inflation is ridiculous combined with a strong need for economic empowerment of the rightsholders. This limits movement-building on many levels, as loss in resources, spaces and energy gives an advantage to marginalizing factors, such as oppressors moving forward their agendas. — One feedback that we received from our grantee partners is the short period of project implementation. When a project was successfully implemented and prepared to capture its results, it missed to see the big change as result of the project.

Table 2. Challenges seen by Voice in rightsholder groups’ efforts to promote change.

Do you think Voice processes enable and/or hinder the different grantee partners and rightsholders to implement their projects as well as to link and learn together?

As for enabling aspects of Voice processes, the respondents mentioned their flexibility, openness and inclusiveness as well as them enabling grantee partners and rightsholders to link and learn. One respondent advised to continue reflecting in other spaces on whether Voice processes are inclusive, timely, transparent, gender-sensitive and as trust-based.

	Responses:
Processes are open, flexible, and inclusive towards grantee partners and rightsholders.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Voice's processes are good and transparent. — We are very positive in our way of work with grantees and rightsholders. — Voice processes are very open, flexible, and inclusive. Voice as a community also always remind us to have an intersectionality approach and hope-based communication which it strengthens the capacity of the grantees. — We have stretched our system well in terms of being flexible to rightsholders. What we need to assess is how this flexibility is affecting the teams. — A revival of the mindful inclusion trajectory is planned for 2023. — I hope we will continue to reflect in other spaces on some of issues mentioned in the second sub question “whether Voice processes are timely, transparent, gender-sensitive and as inclusive as possible”, and I would add trust-based.
Processes enable Linking and Learning among grantee partners and rightsholders.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Voice's process is a great learning opportunity for rightsholders. — Most grantee partners appreciate Linking and Learning platform which indeed enable them to connect, exchange, expand their network and join collaboration or collective action together for stronger voices or advocacy. — Grantee partners highlighted benefits of taking part in Linking and Learning activities, gaining a lot of ideas to work together in addition to learning from each other's expertise. They also developed cross-issue national advocacy strategies. — The request for participation in other grantee partners events and activities or to connect across borders, has grown over the years and is partly met by the 50.000 Euro fund and regional knowledge exchanges. — In principle, the project officers come with a rightsholder, project participant to the Linking and Learning events. However, this might have changed in some countries. Something I might follow up on.

Table 3. Voice processes enabling grantee partners' efforts to implement, link and learn.

As for hindering aspects of Voice processes, the respondents mentioned them being difficult to navigate for some members of country teams and grantee partners. Moreover, some responses indicate that Voice processes were regarded as being insufficient in terms of enabling Voice to ensure good collaboration with all Linking and Learning Facilitators, to overcome language barriers between the stakeholders of the programme, and to either avoid staff turnover or at least mitigate its negative effects.

	Responses:
Processes can be difficult to navigate for country teams and grantee partners.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — There is sometimes bureaucracy and certain procedures of Oxfam, Hivos that create barriers. Some grantee partners complain about the complexity but often tell us later that this has enabled them to be better prepared to access other funding. — Must assess what can we do to remove the stumbling blocks that are impacting the quicker turnaround on contracting and disbursement of funds. — Internal processes around travel are all quite time-consuming and repetitive. — More on-time transfer of funding, mostly on the first funding, as the time between submission and contracting takes a long time.

Processes may not enable Voice to ensure good collaboration with all Linking and Learning Facilitators.	— The Linking and Learning facilitator organisations with a reasonable budget have enabled a lot more than originally foreseen, so no hampering there. However, the understanding and, at times quality of work of the different Linking and Learning facilitators has been a hampering factor in some countries.
Processes may not enable Voice to overcome language barriers among all stakeholders.	— Language remains always a challenge with a diverse group of people, but the creative work and group work often helps to get everybody engaged.
Processes may not enable Voice to either avoid staff turnover or at least mitigate its negative effects.	— Frequent changes in personnel at Voice.

Table 4. Voice processes hindering grantee partners' efforts to implement, link and learn.

We still have more than a year to create a conducive environment for the grantee partners to continue their efforts. What can we do to facilitate this?

While a few respondents suggested that Voice must strengthening its technical support to grantee partners and rightsholders, many focussed on how Voice must continue to foster a more and more conducive environment for grantee partners to strengthen Linking and Learning communities, and to put the “moving on” aspect forward as it enters 2023.

	Responses:
Voice must strengthen its technical support to grantee partners.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Continue empower grantee partners to harvest their project outcomes, documenting their results and amplify their works for scale up or replication by other network, rightsholder group or partners. — Need to start strengthening the capacities of grantee partners based on initial and ongoing assessments. Consider doing this among peers, as a strategy. — Get rid of additional layers to speed tracking of contracting process. — Prepare more training on financial processes to grantee partners.
Voice must continue to foster a more and more conducive environment for grantee partners.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — The country team has consistently committed to the grantee partners to develop and improve the project's quality through regular communication and providing feedback. — To foster a conducive environment, the country team will always communicate openly, respectfully, and transparently. — Create reflective spaces to deepen our understanding of our current ways of working, what can be done differently and the different principles and values of the Voice programme as well as its ambition to contribute to inclusive and accessible resourcing for rightsholders. — More communication with grantee partners specifically. — We can listen more to the grantee partners and respond from their perspective. — To enable further changes to Voice projects, Voice staff must be more committed to service than ever and as a team.
Voice must continue to strengthen Linking and Learning communities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Grantee partners to clearly define their join collective actions for their common advocacy for behaviour or policy change, synergy, and especially define a collective agenda for the sustainability of the Linking and Learning platform through the Community of Practice, stakeholders. — Identify early on opportunities for synergies between actions in projects and introduce the discussion to grantee partners.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — What I think is needed is for country teams and the Linking and Learning community to really expand the reach of the efforts in integrating Linking and Learning into practice, perhaps joining other campaigns, fairs, festivals which are aligned to our advocacy of inclusion. — Linking and Learning Facilitator shared its interest to continue holding the space for the country Linking and Learning community and integrate it within their organization. This may be a great way to sustain connections and efforts. However, no assurance that this will indeed push through and what direction it would take. — Make the experiences with Linking and Learning known to a larger group in the focus countries and beyond. And to support the Linking and Learning Facilitators who are interested to learn as much as possible about inclusive facilitation or any other issue related to Linking and Learning. — Cross-country learning to support grantees in terms of link and learn together. So, we do not only focus on our countries but expand our knowledge about other countries experiences. — Consider doing the upcoming Linking and Learning initiatives with the mindset that we must tackle sustainability among partners.
<p>Voice must continue to put the “moving on” aspect forward.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Foster a networking environment for more participation in international events. This is more developed in anglophone, but not yet enough in francophone Africa. — Voice teams could make introductions for grantee partners to other donors where connections have been made. Information about calls for proposals from other funders could be curated on the website and/or in the Voice Mail. — Voice led donor roundtables profiling work of grantee partners. — Participation in conferences could also be very strategic. Donor mapping can be undertaken, and side meetings organised. Regional mapping of opportunities to take place in Q1 2023. — We are working with grantees to build a sustainability plan for the rightsholders. — Voice must implement a networking and lobby policy. Allow partners and rights holders to participate in international meetings organized by other organizations. — Learning from similar programs with good sustainability mechanisms.

Table 5. Voice team’s views on how Voice can create a conducive environment for grantee partners.

4. THE VOICE GRANTEE PARTNERS FEEDBACK SURVEY

In January and February 2023, Voice gave its grantee partners with active projects in 2022 the opportunity to submit their collective responses to the Voice Grantee Partners Feedback Survey. The survey was designed in English and French to collect feedback from grantee partners on their experiences with the programme in 2022. The survey served as a follow up to the grantee partner survey conducted for Voice by the Center for Effective Philanthropy in 2021. Contributing to Voice’s commitment to mutual accountability, transparency and information sharing, the survey wanted to generate insights that help to improve understanding and collaboration between all grantee partners and Voice in 2023.

The survey recorded responses from a total of 108 respondents, of which 90 completed the full survey and were included in the quantitative analysis (see Figure 1). Of the remaining respondents’ submissions only qualitative responses were included, depending on the questions that were filled out. Overall, the participants in the survey represent slightly more than half of the grantee partners with ongoing Voice projects in 2022.

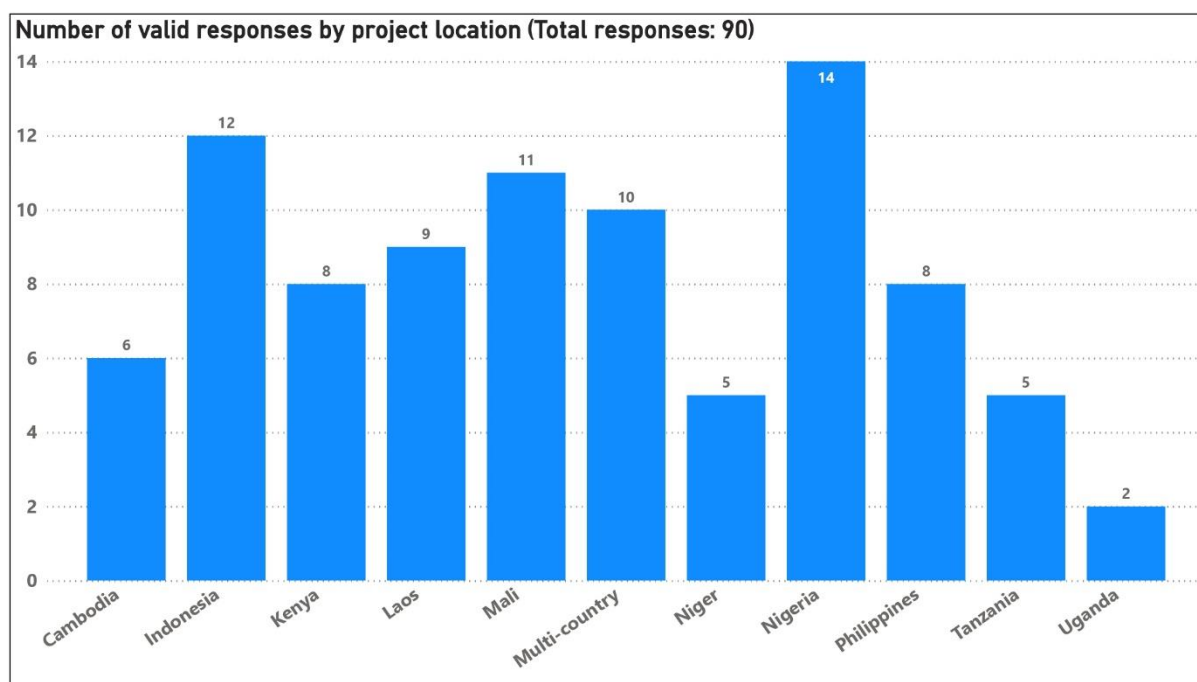


Figure 1. Number of valid responses by project location.

About the respondents

Most respondents work with People with disabilities (28.5%), followed closely by Vulnerable youth and elderly (26.7%), and Women facing exploitation, abuse and/or violence (21.2%) (see Figure 2). Projects focusing on promoting the rights of Indigenous people and ethnic minorities (13.9%) as well as LGBTI people (9.7%) were comparatively less well-represented. This trend follows the overall trend of grant distribution among the five rightsholder groups that Voice supports.

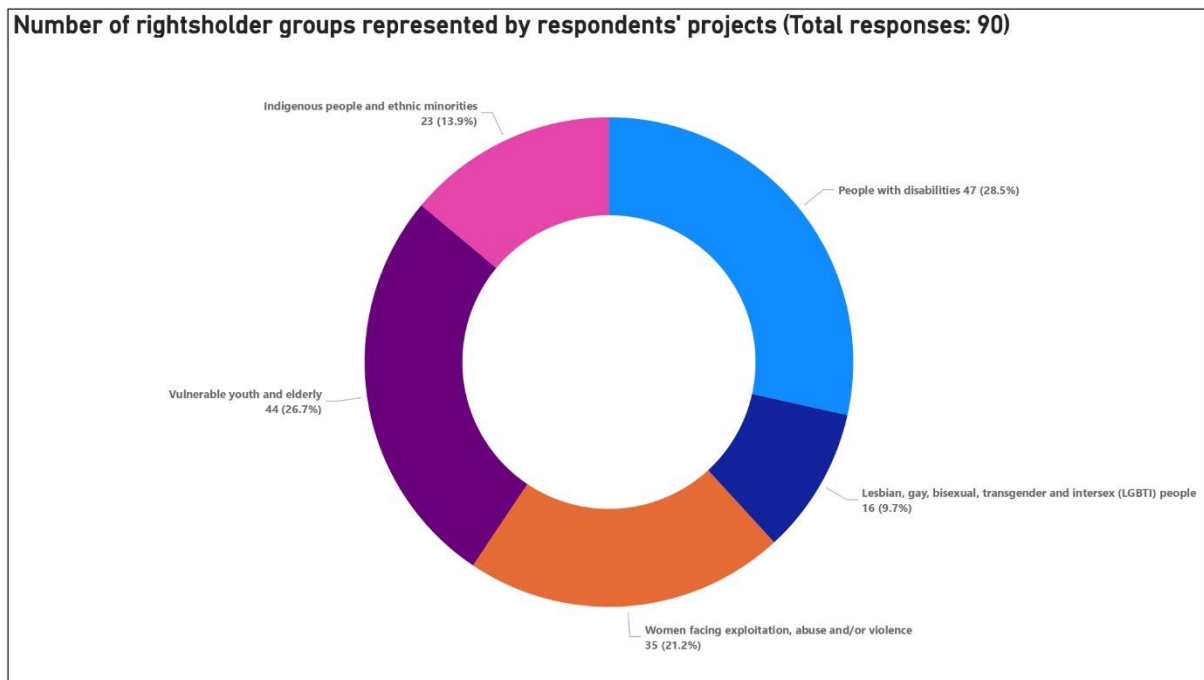


Figure 2. Number of rightsholder groups represented by respondents' projects.

A majority of respondents (58.9%) have been in partnership with Voice for over two years and most of the other respondents (33.3%) have worked in partnership with Voice for 1-2 years (see Figure 3). Only a minority of respondents (7.8%) fall within the category of under 1 year, which is perhaps a reflection of the effective implementation of the recommendation 2021 Grantee Perception Survey on working towards facilitating longer partnerships. A milestone that would have been made possible by the fact that there are grant types such as the Empowerment accelerator that allow previous grantee partners to reapply for grants to scale up their initiatives as well as targeted repeat grants under the Extension phase made to some partners who received grants from Voice, also in phase 1.

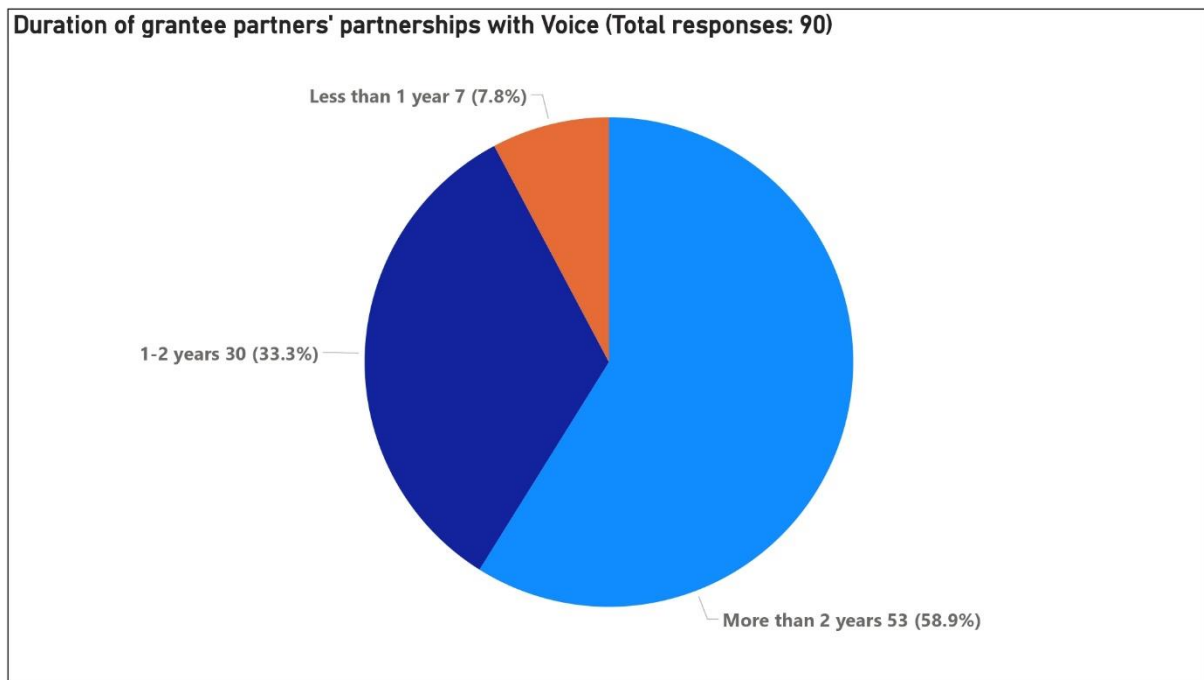


Figure 3. Duration of grantee partners' partnerships with Voice.

Interactions between grantee partners and Voice, looking at their quantity

About half of the respondents (52.2%) indicated that their project teams interact with Voice about once every month, followed by a third of the respondents (33.3%) indicating less than once a month and a few respondents (14.4%) indicating weekly interactions (see Figure 4). Most commonly, the interactions seem to be initiated either in equal frequency by grantee partners or Voice (62.2 %) (see Figure 5). However, some grantees perceive the interactions to be more often initiated by themselves (21.1%) or by Voice (16.7%). In terms of approachability, most respondents (75.6%) feel comfortable in approaching Voice, while there are some respondents (23.3%) who suggest that Voice teams' approachability can improve and there is even one respondent (1.1%) who feels that Voice is not approachable at all (see Figure 6).

It seems important for Voice teams to close any gaps in terms of interactions with grantee partners that feel less comfortable when it comes to approaching Voice. Voice's existing approach to monitor and measure interactions can be used to obtain the information needed to accomplish this task. Moreover, all team members will be encouraged to proactively reach out to grantee partners to dispel perceptions about lack of approachability.

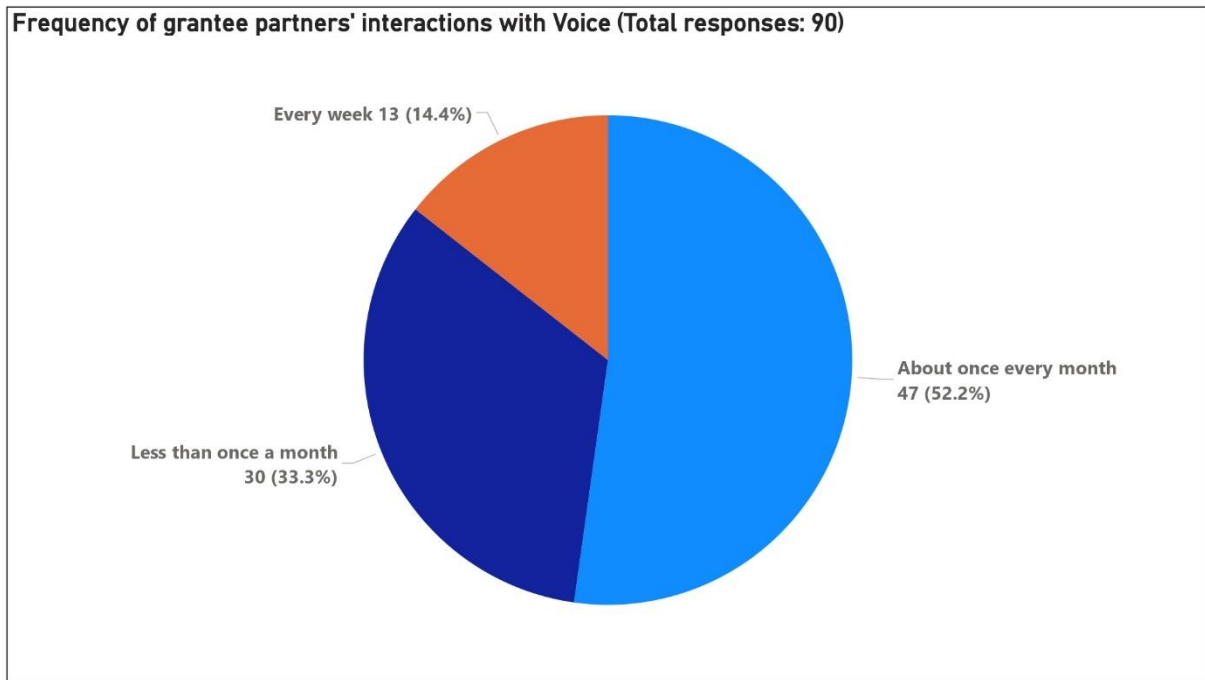


Figure 4. Frequency of grantee partners' interactions with Voice.

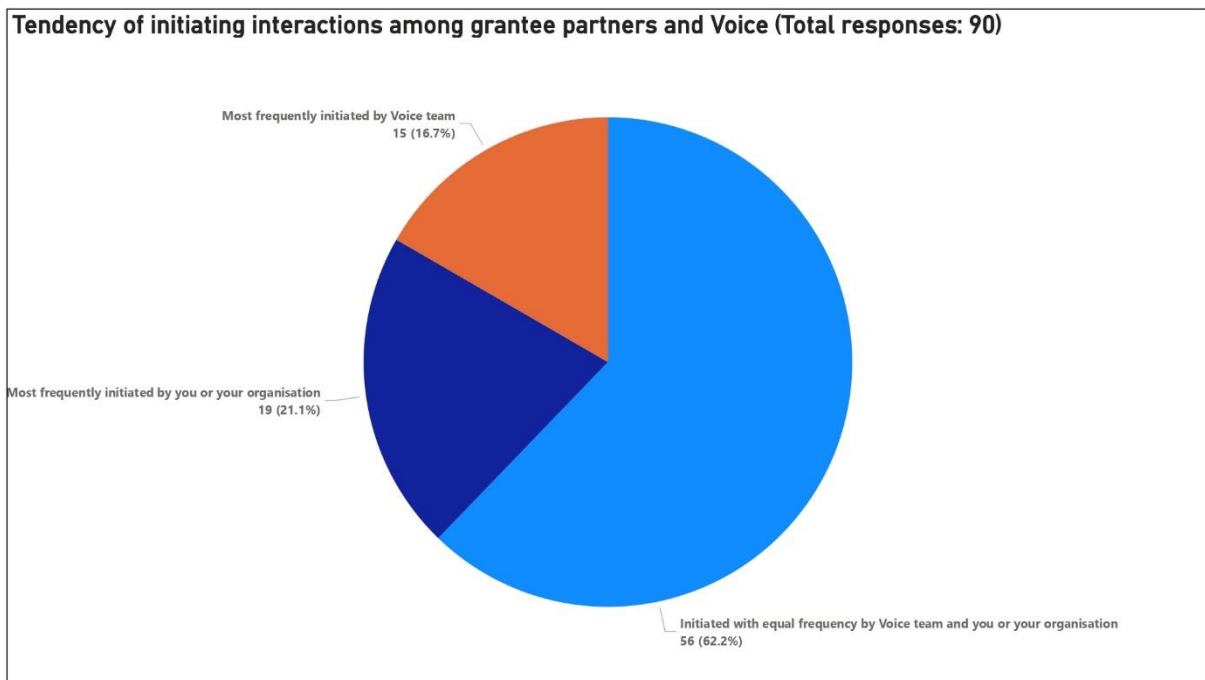


Figure 5. Tendency of initiating interactions among grantee partners and Voice.

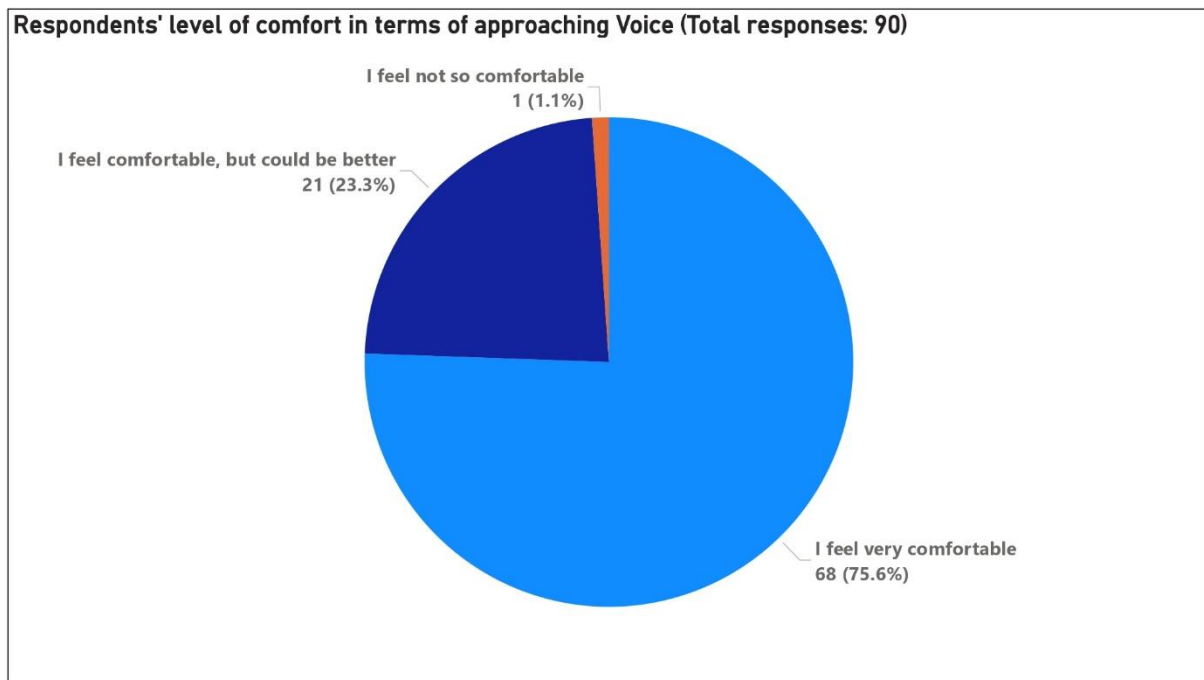


Figure 6. Respondents' level of comfort in terms of approaching Voice.

Interactions between grantee partners and Voice, looking at their quality

The respondents indicated that most grantee partners are satisfied with the responsiveness of Voice staff, with most indicating that Voice staff are very responsive (58.9%) or at least responsive enough (40.0%) and only one respondent indicating to not be satisfied (1.1%) (see Figure 7). As for Voice's mandate to strengthen grantee partners' organisational capabilities (such as on report writing), about half of the respondents indicated awareness of such support (51.1%), while the other half were not aware of it (48.9%) (see Figure 8).

The respondents mentioned several areas of support, including narrative and financial reporting, hope-based communication, Monitoring and Evaluation (Outcome Harvesting), proposal writing and budget development, social media management, advocacy, and Linking and Learning in general.

When asked about having experienced any Voice staff acting unprofessionally, the overwhelming majority of respondents indicated no such experiences (93.3%), while a few did indicate such experiences (4.4%) or did not want to say (2.2%) (see Figure 9).

Among the four respondents that experienced Voice staff acting unprofessionally, several aspects were mentioned, including disrespectful engagements since the beginning of the project, unethical and irrational utterances during meetings, patronising behaviour and utterances, tokenism in the execution of the partnership, and condescending language when incorrect invoices had been submitted.

The respondents' feedback implies that Voice must continue to improve its responsiveness and promote its capacity strengthening mandate with grantee partners based on regular check ins and reflection. Moreover, it is essential that Voice remains vigilant in using and improving its existing

feedback and monitoring processes and tools such as the whistle-blower mechanism to ensure that unprofessional conduct of Voice staff can be avoided completely or at least responded to in a timely manner. When such reports are made via the whistle-blower mechanism, they are addressed independently by the Voice programme manager in discussion with the relevant Hivos or Oxfam country leadership teams.

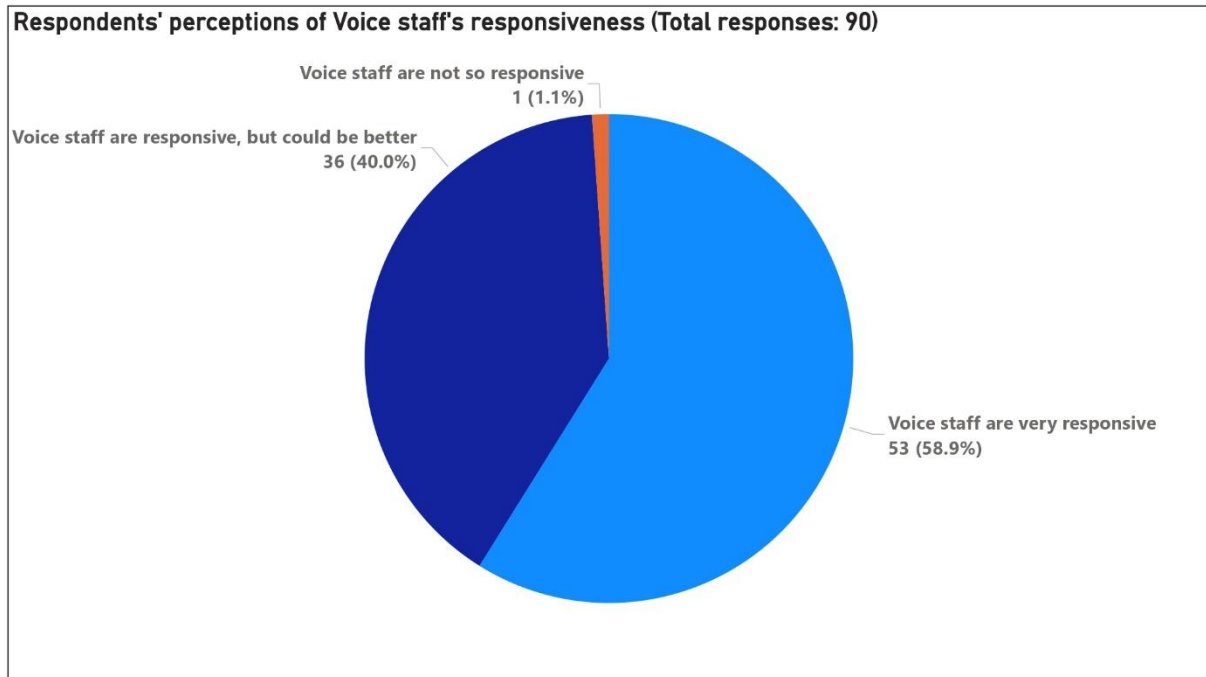


Figure 7. Respondents' perceptions of Voice staff's responsiveness.

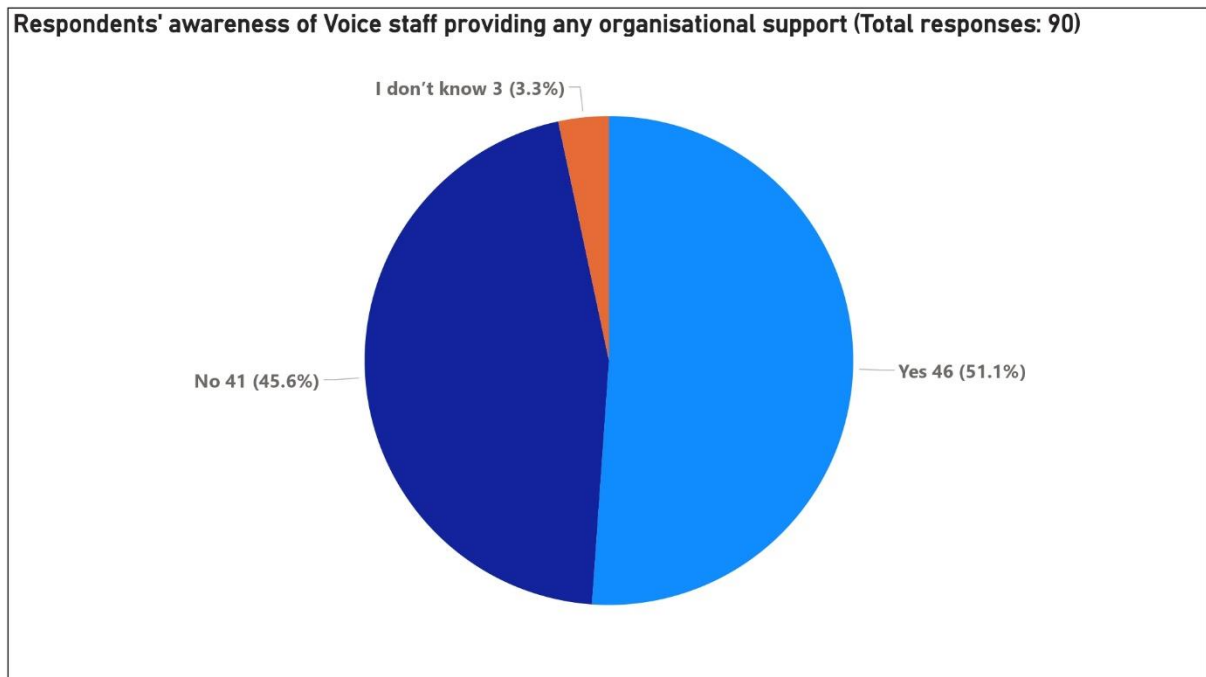


Figure 8. Respondents' awareness of Voice staff providing any organisational support.

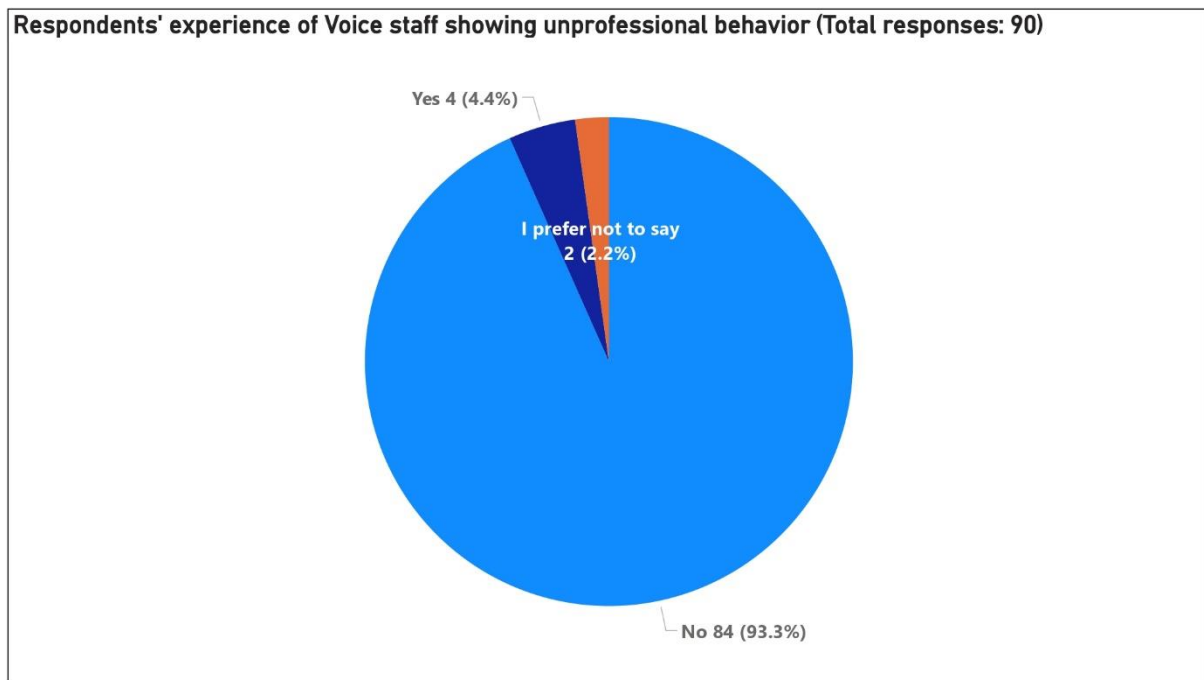


Figure 9. Respondents' experience of Voice staff showing unprofessional behavior.

Interactions between grantee partners and Voice, based on selected activities

The majority of respondents have engaged with Voice on grant management in the past, including on conversation-based reporting (76.7%), submitting annual reports (68.9%) as well as financial monitoring or verification (73.3%) (see Figures 10, 11, and 12).

The respondents mentioned several positive aspects of conversation-based reporting, such as it being a great and interactive experience and it serving as a proper mediation process to address misunderstandings. Furthermore, they indicated that conversation-based reporting has led to prompt responses to issues, faster transfer of funds, more equality and equity in the partnerships, reduced tokenism, and lower reporting pressure. At the same time, several aspects to improve regarding conversation-based reporting were mentioned, such as more time allocation for the conversations, improving ways of communication, Voice showing more respect to grantee partners, and that preparation takes the same time as for submitting a narrative report.

The respondents mentioned that the template for annual report submission was easy to use. They also mentioned as positive aspects Voice's flexibility in terms of submitting reports (such as using audio-visual media, etc.), Voice teams' responsiveness to queries, and their active support when submitting and revising both narrative and financial reports. At the same time, several aspects to improve regarding annual report submission were mentioned, such as improving the response speed and offering more support on the reporting tools.

Among the 66 respondents that indicated having participated in financial monitoring and expenditure verification exercises, two respondents raised concerns about handling of financial matters. While these concerns cannot be outlined in this this perception brief to

ensure confidentiality, they will be followed up by the Voice coordination team through proper channels.

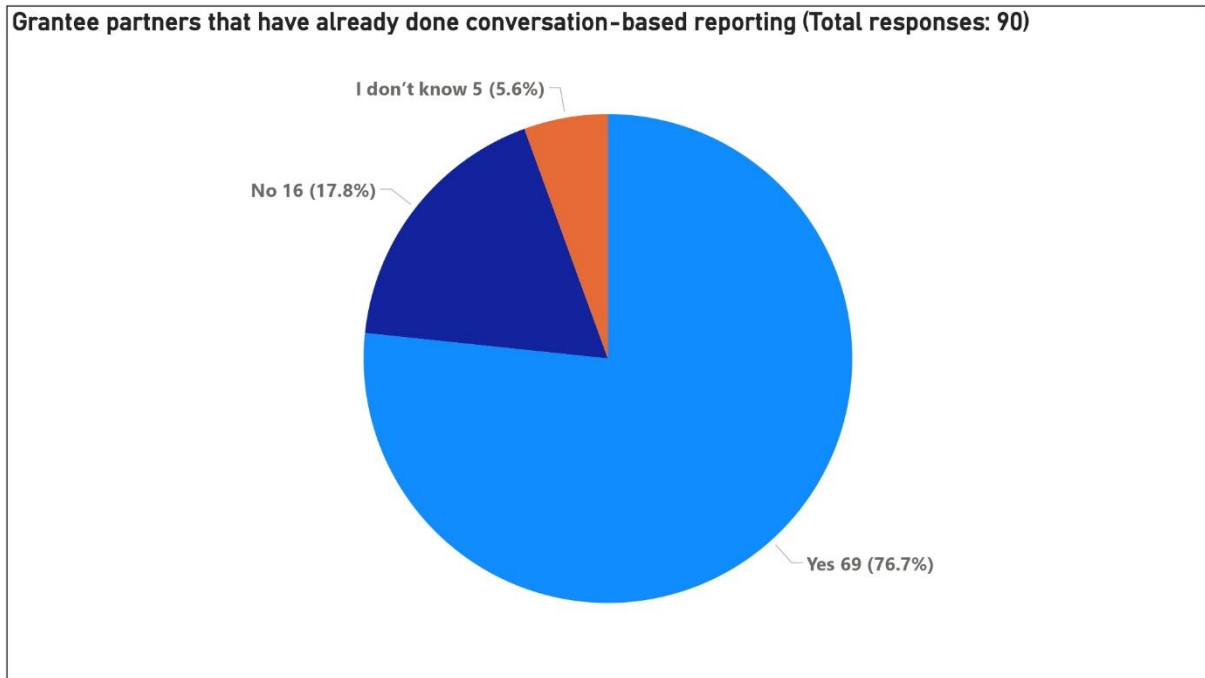


Figure 10. Grantee partners that have already done conversation-based reporting.

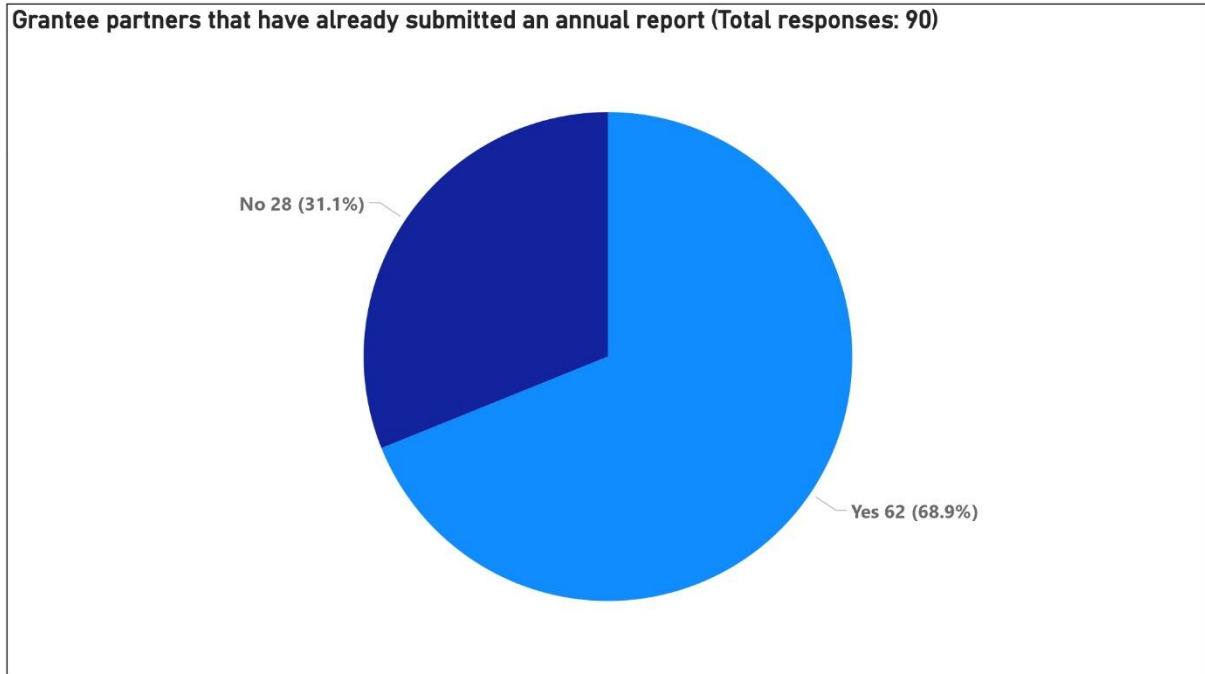


Figure 11. Grantee partners that have already submitted an annual report.

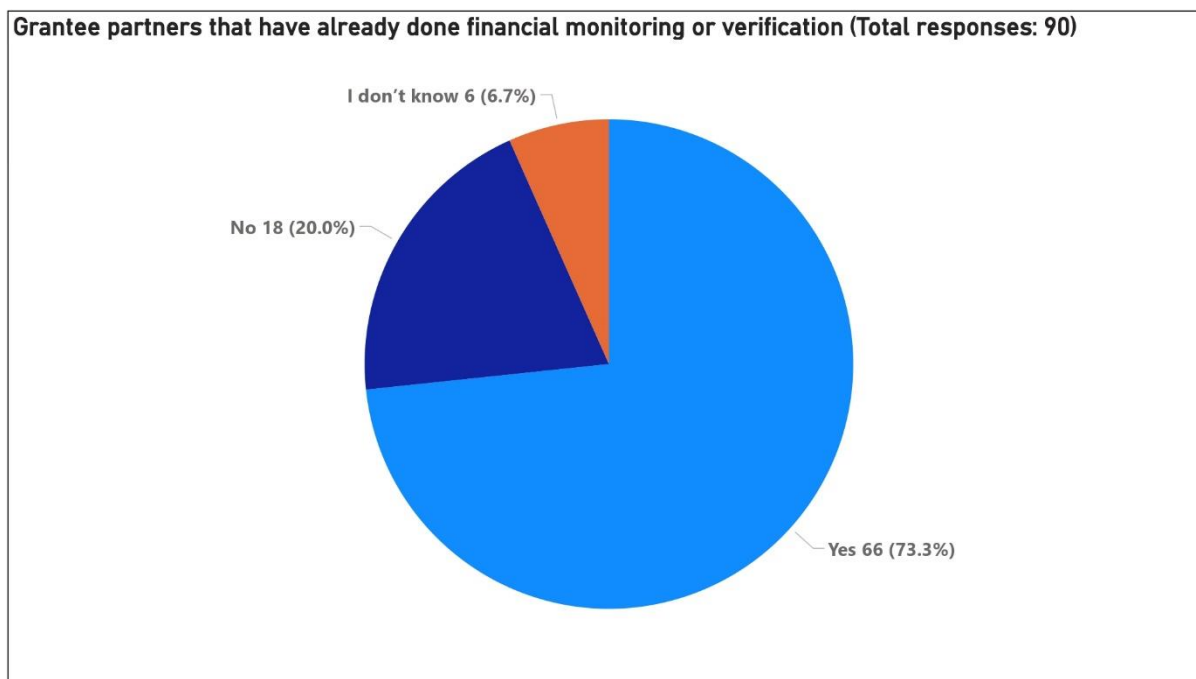


Figure 12. Grantee partners that have already done financial monitoring or verification.

About half of respondents (52.2%) have already been engaged by Voice on Outcome Harvesting (see Figure 13).

Overall, respondents characterised the Outcome Harvesting write-shops of Voice as a great networking opportunity based on well-organised and interesting workshops. At the same time, respondents asked Voice for more women involvement in the workshops, more attention regarding choice of venues, increased frequency and length of workshops, and better logistical arrangements to enhance grantee partner participation.

Moreover, respondents indicated that Outcome Harvesting is a positive and reflective exercise that – although based on a challenging approach – entailed a lot of learning that helped to improve their Monitoring and Evaluation as well as reporting skills and can be replicated grantee partners across their different projects beyond Voice. For the respondents, this included a better understanding of the link between results and the Theory of Change, the ability to makes impact more visible (based on both intended and unintended changes, for example), and the ability to harness past experiences to incorporate new learnings and facilitate adaptive management.

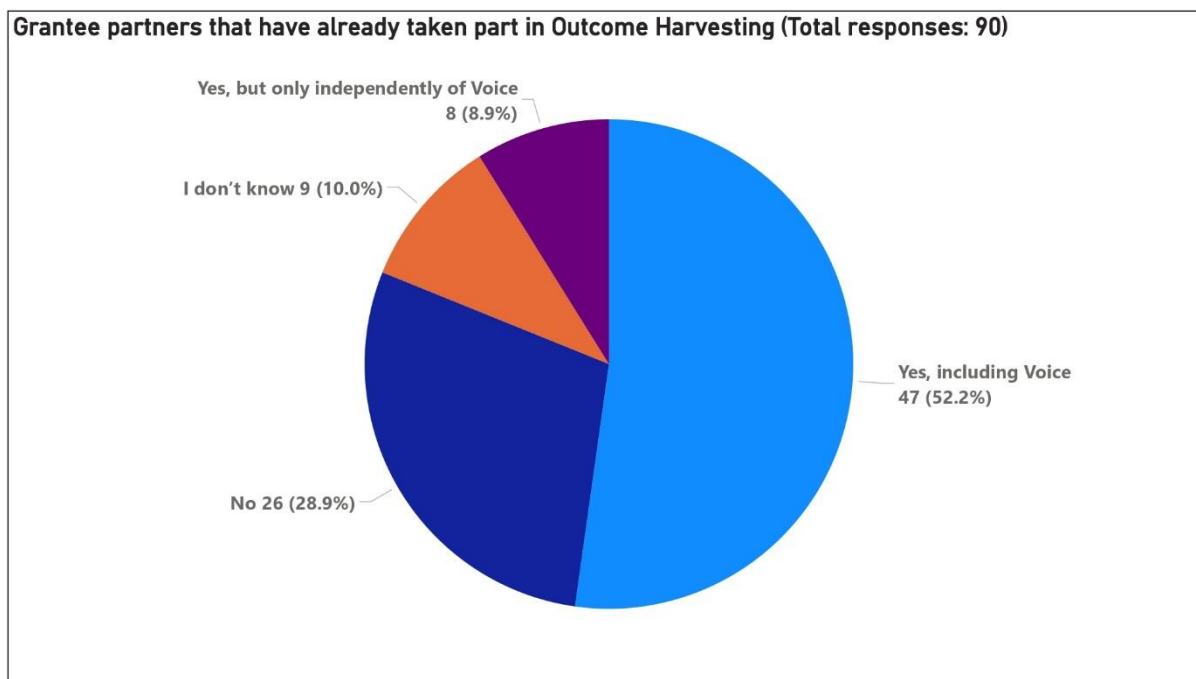


Figure 13. Grantee partners that have already taken part in Outcome Harvesting.

The overwhelming majority of respondents have engaged with Voice on Linking and Learning (91.1%), with most having participated in both online and in-person activities (76.7%) and some only in online activities (14.4%) (see Figure 14). Moreover, most of the respondents have been part of a Community of Practice (71.1%) (see Figure 15).

Respondents mentioned several positive highlights of Linking and Learning, such as it being an opportunity to build and forge collective partnerships among rightsholder groups, a great avenue for experience sharing (regarding lessons learned, good practices, etc.), and a great space to learn both hard- and soft-skills. Furthermore, they applauded its mutual capacity strengthening on various topics and themes, also based on the Community of Practice approach. At the same time, respondents asked Voice for more in-person events, more consideration to the work of grantee partners in regarding frequency and timing of online events, and more involvement of grantee partner staff and rightsholders in events.

As for the Community of Practice approach, respondents recognised it as a great platform that promotes sustainability beyond Voice, that gives participants an opportunity to learn from each other's success and failures, that facilitates mutual capacity strengthening, that promotes coalition building, and that improves the visibility of grantee partners' interventions. However, respondents also demanded more relevant topics and partners for sharing, more in-person meetings as opposed to online events, more involvement of Voice teams, and better learning resources. It was also mentioned that the Community of Practice concept itself was not well understood by some grantee partners.

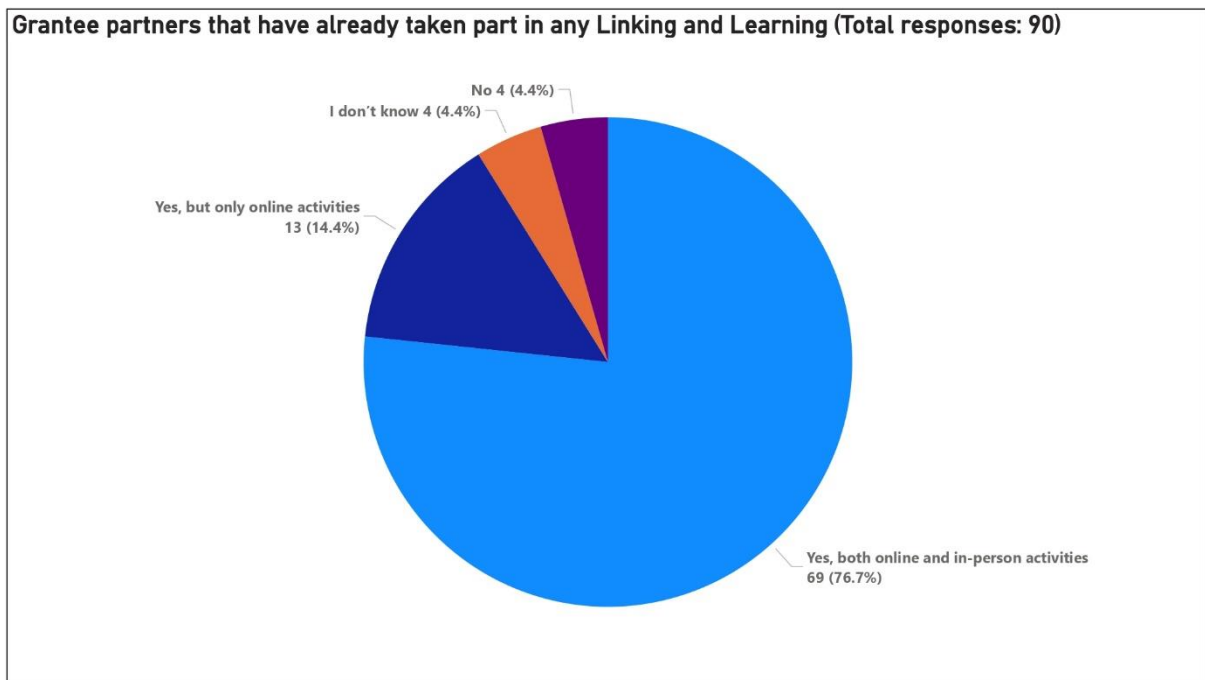


Figure 14. Grantee partners that have already taken part in any Linking and Learning.

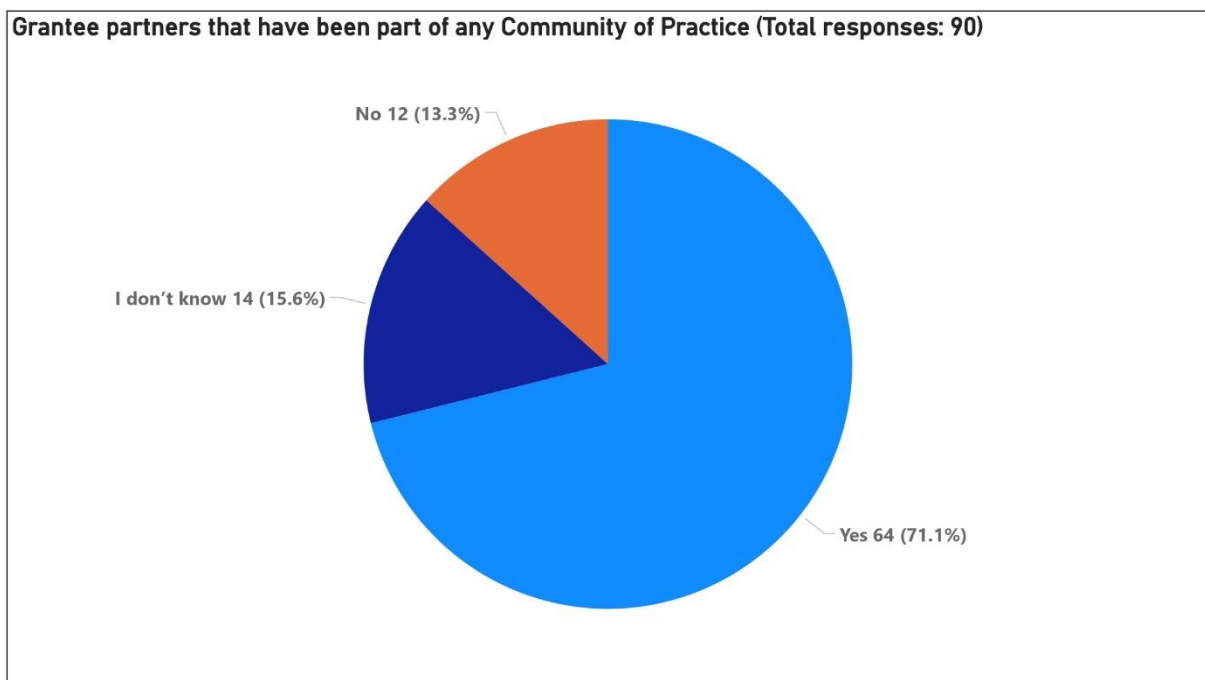


Figure 15. Grantee partners that have been part of any Community of Practice.

Overall perceptions of grantee partners regarding Voice

The majority of respondents (67.8%) indicate a very good impression of the overall quality of Voice's services, while about a third of them (32.2%) were not fully satisfied (see Figure 16). It can be noted that Indonesia and the Philippines in Asia as well as Kenya and Tanzania in Africa have

relatively higher percentages of respondents that indicate being very satisfied with Voice’s services (see Figure 17 and Table 6).

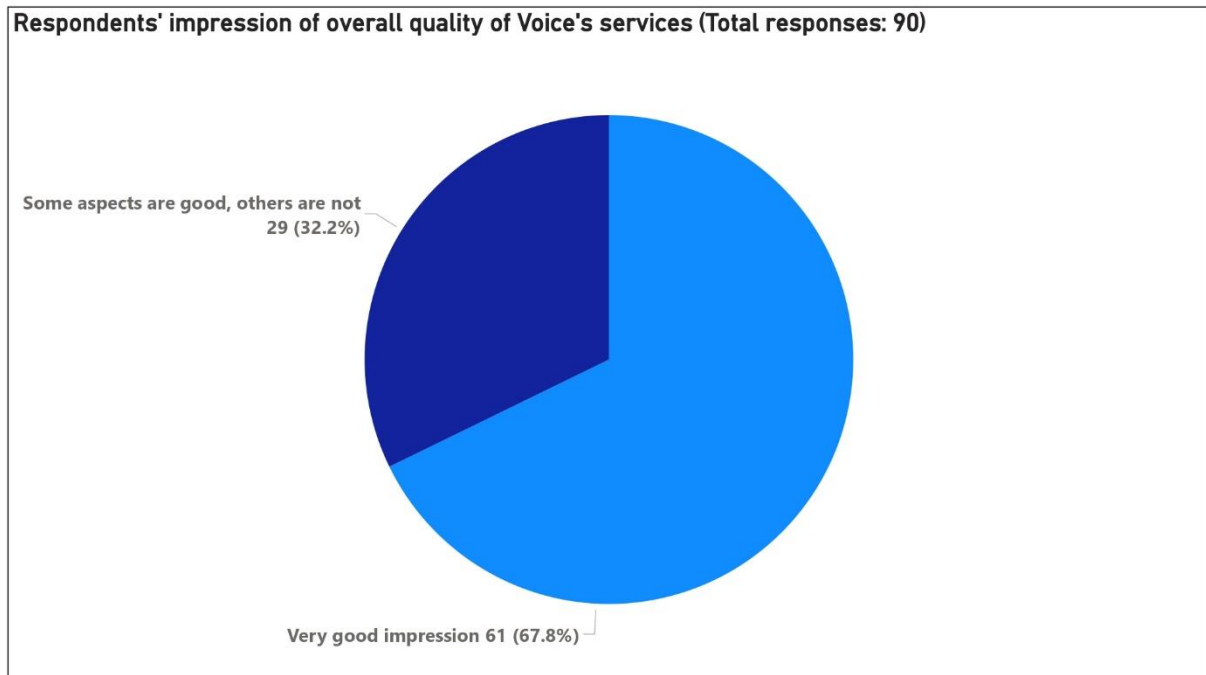


Figure 16. Respondents' impression of overall quality of Voice's services.

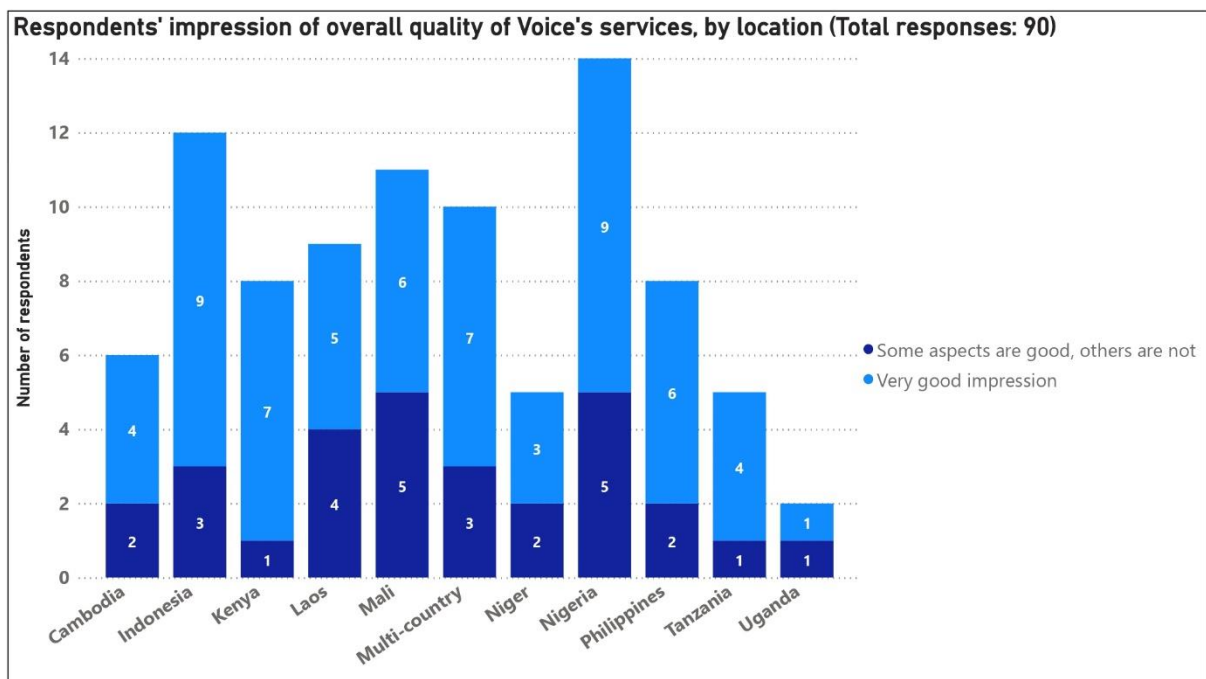


Figure 17. Respondents' impression of overall quality of Voice's services, by location.

Cambodia	Indonesia	Kenya	Laos	Mali	Multi-country	Niger	Nigeria	Philippines	Tanzania	Uganda
66.7%	75.0%	87.5%	55.6%	54.5%	70.0%	60.0%	64.3%	75.0%	80.0%	50.0%

Table 6. Respondents indicating to be very satisfied with Voice's services, by country.

At the end of the survey, Voice asked its grantee partners for any actions that it could take to become a better funder as well as any other feedback that the respondents wanted to share with the Voice team. The responses were then categorised and summarised based on key topics (see Table 7).

	Responses:
Inclusiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — More focus on the needs of informal groups. — Enhance accessibility and inclusion in ways of working. — Make Voice social media platforms more accessible for grantee partners. — Stronger emphasis on disability inclusion within Voice, based on staff capacity strengthening and having a disability inclusion office. — Fund more LGBTI inclusion initiatives.
Voice processes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Enhance grant-making processes to reduce approval and funds disbursement timeframes, including on more staff at the national level. — Revisit project targets, as they are predetermined and difficult to apply in certain contexts. — Enhance flexibility in funds management, such as reviewing overhead limit. — Show more flexibility in budget realignment processes. — Improve the budget proposal and financial report templates to make them more user-friendly for grantee partners. — More trainings, coaching and mentorship for grantee partners.
Working together	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Improve communication with grantee partners. — Increase the communication frequency, based on more information sessions. — More face-to-face interactions between Voice teams and grantee partners. — Enhance professionalism in dealing with partners' concerns. — Enhance responsiveness and be more solution-oriented, reducing the blame game. — Adopt ethical behaviour in engagements with grantee partners. — Look into the high turnover of Voice staff.
Sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Long-term funding. — More support to upscale projects. — Linking grantee partners to other prospective funders. — Collaboration with government agencies to ease their buy-in of grantee partner's initiatives. — Psychological empowerment must be accompanied by financial empowerment actions. — Allow grantee partners to engage in income-generating activities for greater support to rightsholders, based on cross-subsidy in social enterprise.

Table 7. Actions that Voice could take to become a better funder as well as any other feedback.

5. OVERALL FINDINGS, COMMITMENTS AND FURTHER ACTIONS

After analysing all responses collected based on the online discussion and the online surveys, the Voice Monitoring and Evaluation team produced this global perception brief. A few reflections based on discussions among the coordination team are divided below based on three aspects – past narratives, present gains, and the aspired future (see Table 8).

Past narratives:	Present gains:	The aspired future:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Voice teams gained understanding of the different country contexts and working with grantee partners. — Many grantee partners achieved positive outcomes based on rightsholders’ initiative and leadership on empower, amplify, and influence pathways. — Many grantee partners gained significant added value from Voice L&L infrastructure and processes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Streamlining processes around grant management and L&L, such as closures, reporting and events. — Strengthening information flows and knowledge management as Voice “moves on” next year. — Making efforts to mind work/life balance and wellbeing across teams and with grantee partners. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Voice teams will have solidified their support on grant management and L&L, intersectionality, and other aspects. — Grantee partners will be ready to “move on” after completing their projects. — Voice’s impact and learnings will be comprehensively captured and capitalized on.

Table 8. Reflection of the coordination team on past narratives, present gains, and the aspired future.

Based on the online discussion and the online surveys, many recommendations to improve the programme’s implementation further through 2023-24 were received. The Voice coordination team and the country teams responded to most of these recommendations, agreeing on the following action points (see Table 9).

	Recommendations:	Action points:
<p>1. On a proposed meta-analysis: Such an analysis would link what Voice is, what it wants to be, and what Voice’s impact is.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — We should aim at enhancing information flows and talking about the impact of grantee partners (and Voice as a program) more vividly and beyond individual events. 	<p>The coordination team to check on status of the suggestion to have a small group set up in 2023 to bring forward an approach for a meta-analysis.</p> <p>A plan will be developed identifying the data sources, such as grantee partners’ reports, impact stories, and stories of change.</p> <p>This is going to be conducted by an internal group.</p>
<p>2. On a challenge seen by country teams: There are many activities that rightsholder organisations do, but most conduct their advocacy on their own. The problem may be the lack of coordinated approaches to some advocacy initiatives.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — We should reflect on whether Voice is in the position to address this and, if yes, how. 	<p>A reflection on what can be done to respond, for example providing safe spaces and making connections.</p> <p>However, we cannot force connections and safe spaces.</p>

<p>3. On a challenge seen by country teams: Some mentions on the limitations of safe spaces being organised within the L&L infrastructure. This has been a recurring theme.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — We should reflect on our (and the LLF's) capacities around creating and facilitating such spaces, within the context of the do-no-harm principle. 	<p>One response can be the mindful inclusion activities.</p> <p>Understanding the limitation that we can only create “safer spaces”. There is no space that is completely safe.</p>
<p>4. On a discussion of Voice processes enabling/hindering grantee partners: Pick up as a reflection point that we have stretched our system well in terms of being flexible to rightsholders.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — We should assess how this flexibility is affecting the Voice team. 	<p>A reflection on the question in how far we are stretching ourselves.</p> <p>The Philippines example where a grantee partner shared that this was the first instance where a funder supported them to write a report.</p>
<p>5. On a discussion of Voice processes enabling/hindering grantee partners: The following recommendation link to issues mentioned in the second sub question “whether Voice processes are timely, transparent, gender-sensitive and as inclusive as possible”, and trust-based.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — We should monitor interactions using existing tools to assess where gaps might be, with an initial focus on Voice being able to at least respond to grantee partners in a timely manner and a further focus on Voice being able to tailor its support to each grantee partner’s specific capabilities, needs and wants. — We should encourage all team members to proactively reach out to grantee partners to dispel perceptions about lack of approachability and to check in and reflect with grantee partners regularly to improve Voice’s responsiveness and promote its capacity strengthening mandate. — We should continue using the existing feedback and monitoring processes and tools such as the whistle-blower mechanism to ensure that unprofessional conduct of Voice staff can be avoided completely or at least responded to in a timely manner. — We should discuss how different teams are positioning themselves when engaging with the partners. Do they heavily present themselves as Voice staff or Oxfam/Hivos staff (as it is possible for organisational affiliation to influence perceptions on interactions)? 	<p>A reflection on several potential actions around processes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Limit the delaying effect of the ping-pong approach within our processes as much as possible. — Revisit the overhead limit, upscale it, and be more flexible on it. — Enhance grantee partners’ understanding of the budget template and the financial report template. — Make budget realignment more flexible, shortening the period between contracting and final transfer as much as possible. — Make provision for capacity strengthening (specifically on financial management) and psychosocial support on financial processes. <p>A reflection on several potential actions to strengthen good relationships with grantee partners.</p>
<p>6. On a discussion of Voice processes enabling/hindering grantee partners: Thinking about how the understanding and (at times) quality of work of the LLFs differs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — We should think how Voice either treats them as partners (and even members of Voice teams) or service providers due to the nature of contract. 	<p>A reflection to mitigate some of the confusion about whether they are contractors or part of Voice teams.</p>

<p>7. On a discussion of how Voice can create a conducive environment for grantee partners: What technical support are we “supposed” to provide? Or how far are we expected to support in this? We cannot provide it directly, but grantee partners can include in their budget initiatives to do organisational development and co-create spaces within L&L on technical needs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — We should be honest with ourselves if we do not have the intention to invest too much on it directly. This also involves changing perceptions on donor-grantee relationships. — We should talk about how teams “are working with grantees to build a sustainability plan for the rightsholders”. 	<p>A reflection on how we can be more realistic regarding our roles, what we can do, and what we have control over.</p> <p>A reflection on several potential actions around sustainability plans for rightsholders:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Support grantee partners in accessing long-term funding with other funders beyond information sharing about funding opportunities. — Support grantee partners to transit to social enterprise structure and/or to access corporate funding for longer-term change. — Accompany empowerment of grantee partners with financial empowerment. — Emphasise cross-country L&L, so grantee partners and rightsholders can access peer-to-peer support.
<p>8. On a discussion of how Voice can create a conducive environment for grantee partners: There were several recommendations made by the respondents to improve the grantee partner survey.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Reflect on challenges of grantee partners, especially Indigenous people, and ethnic minorities as well as LGBTI people, to access and participate in this kind of survey. — Ask in future surveys on grantee partners’ ideal donor, grant representative profile, including their perceived ideal roles and level of engagement of grant managers with grantee partners. 	<p>These points will be considered in future surveys.</p>

Table 9. Recommendations and action points.