

Minutes kick-off meeting – Voices for Inclusion

Date: 02-07-2019

Present: Anneke Hofs (LF), Linda Daniëls (LF), Karin Rozendal (LF), Willem Elbers (ASCL), Auma Okwany (ISS), Daniel Boyco (Voices for Inclusion), Kahlille Seranilla (Philippines), Innocent Hitayezu (Rwanda), Kerstin Beise (Indonesia), Mr. Suryono (Indonesia), Aisha Ibrahim (Sierra Leone), Vivienne Ochee Bamgboye (Nigeria)

Agenda:

Time	What
11:00	Introduction: who is who? (15 min)
11:15	Intersectionality: what is it, and what do we want to learn about it? (30 min)
11:45	Approach exchange visits + learning event (30 min)
12:15	Visual documentation (5 min)
12:20	Any other business (5 min)
12:25	Closing (5 min)

Introductions

- Karin: Liliane Fonds. Project leader for Voices for Inclusion.
- Kerstin: Indonesia (Dare This). Consultancy cooperation in NL, stationed in Indonesia. Working in issues like Disability and LGBT. Interesting to learn about others.
- Suryono: (Dare This) Indonesia.
- Kahlille, Philippines. Freelance. Worked with Voice before. I am person with disability.
- Innocent, Rwanda. Independent consultant. Worked on women's economic empowerment. Policy analysis and advocacy.
- Vivienne. Independent consultant. Social policy reform in Nigeria and East Africa (Uganda). Manager in technical advisory team of Ministry of Agriculture of Nigeria. Convenor of multi-stakeholder engagement between government staff and officials and marginalized youth and women in agriculture. Worked with youth in Nigeria.
- Aisha. Teach at Institute for Gender Research and Documentation. Research on women's participation and gender based violence.
- Willem. I work at university as a lecturer. Working with LF for 4 years on disability advocacy. Looking from successful projects and learning from them.
- Auma. Teach at ISS. In The Hague. From Kenya. Willem and I been involved in the projects as supervision of master students. That has lead into this project.
- Linda. Communication specialist at LF.
- Daniel. Researcher at Voices for Inclusion.

On intersectionality:

Liliane Fonds on intersectionality:

- Willem: I would like to start a discussion to know why are we doing this? Why is it important?
- Karin: Intersectionality came from a research of Breaking Down Barriers. If you only focus on disability, it can be too narrow. Women's groups face similar kind of exclusion than the disability groups. Disability groups, in their advocacy, are they considering internal differences?
- Willem: What are your current thoughts of what you will get out of this?
- Anneke: Example: a woman with disability, part of women and disability movement. In both, she feels she is not fully accepted. We want to see people come together, not the same feeling of exclusion, or common feeling of not being respected. People can learn from themselves: 'I had an assumption on certain types of people'.
- Karin: By using an intersectional lens, you can be more inclusive.

Consultants on intersectionality:

- Willem To the consultants: does it make sense to you for the country you are based in?
- Viviane: It makes a lot of sense for me. Because of the time we are in as a country. There's a lot of fragmentation. Complaints about marginalization.
- Innocent: from my context, I understand it is important. Rwanda and our historical political background, the push for national identity. Ethnic groups' names is related. We do analyse some challenges, special needs for a particular group, deeper to understand. How can education impact on people's voice, if a particular group is not benefiting from the education? You have to dig on your parents, the policy framework, the reason why this particular group not advancing. One region has dominated the politics of the country. You have to understand all barriers. Even within disabilities, some structures are affecting women in rural areas vs. urban settings. We have to understand that connectivity.
- Kerstin. Challenges and exclusion, that alone is worthwhile. In Indonesia and other countries, not knowing each other brings stigmatisation and therefore fragmentation of social movements. They do not know each other. They exclude each other. Important to meet each other and learn from each other.
- Aisha. I always worked from an intersectional perspective. For me this is important because it's been introduced to organisations and they may not be familiar. Rural vs. urban is a very central, that's what I would like to see. How even gender and location intersect with the communities they work. How the culture impacts the way they are responded to. The way education affects the access. Affect how to advocate for disability.
- Kahlille. In Philippines, issues can be discussed more effectively when it is supported by a lot of groups. If something is pushed by one group, like antidiscrimination, if only LGBT group is pushing for it, it cuts across other groups as well. Children, women. Universal Health care has been passed recently. Every group is concerned on how to put themselves in that.
- Suryono: The issue of intersectionality is important in Indonesian context. We work on similar issues, but don't come together in a similar platform. More effective for advocacy to come together.

Willem and Auma on being self-reflexive:

- Willem: when you work with intersectional perspective, you have to be reflexive. How you look at that. As a human being, you have your own position as a woman, or man, or person of specific status. How would this affect your perspective on this project?
- Auma: Important to really reflect on what we bring to situations. We come with our underlying assumption. And we have to be as aware as possible. My work is primarily with children and youth in development. We say the greatest asset is the children and the biggest obstacle is the assumptions. Reflexivity is the best opportunity to understand what do we know and how do we know it. Very intentional reflexivity is critical. How we think through that.
- Willem: How can we help ourselves in that process?
- Auma: This conversation is a good start. A continuation of asking. Sometimes we work in an area and we think we know. But as I listen to people, what is the thread that holds together is “marginality”, being people with disabilities or any other marginalized group. Intersectionality is a tool for social justice and activism. If people are to draw on that, we have to be critical in working with the groups we are working with. What do they know about it?

Consultants on being self-reflexive:

- Willem: We will bring this groups together and ask them and yourselves to look at each other. We can expect these groups to have stereotypical views of each other. How do we make them go beyond that?
- Kerstin: One example from my experience, working with disability and leprosy. Recently working together a lot. In the beginning it took information. First to tell what is leprosy about. What is LGBT about. We worked a lot on the information as a start.
- Viviane: The intentionality is crucial and also understanding that the boundaries of marginality can themselves come with assumptions that stifle the ability to work in a larger group . Getting feedback and using the feedback to challenge our assumptions. I think it starts with putting our thoughts out there, and then getting feedback. Using the feedback to challenge any hard held assumptions.
- Innocent: Question to move from our reflection. We learn from personal life experiences and our exposure. From my personal experience, we can only have personal attitudes. We need to adjust our attitudes. It matters a lot how we have felt our own exclusions.
- Willem: This in conceptual terms. I think what we just did is sharing views. I see we are on the same page. The importance of reflexivity is noted. Saying it is one thing, doing it is another. Shall we talk about practicalities?

Guidance and tips:

- Karin: Tips on how to create openness in this environment. Might be very important how to name another group. Disabled people vs. people with disability can be a big difference. Reflection about your own group. Use the ACAP framework.
- Aisha: The various advocacy groups, none of them work on various issues. There’s no one that works in a number of issues. Understand how they understand. ACAP I think its very actual and very useful. I think they can be modified as well.

- Willem. It would be very nice to take the leanings from the first group to the second, and then to the third.
- Kahlile. My reflection about the two documents. Also looking at the original TOR. Also a lot of questions. What do they bring. Perhaps you want to answer the learning questions from a specific question of intersectionality.
- Karin: The questions from the ToR won't be direct questions to ask the participants.
- Anneke: The ACAP should be seen more as a tool.
- Kerstin: Reading the ACAP questions: is it, are we mainly at these exchange meetings, so that everybody becomes aware of intersectionality?
- Anneke: To learn from their advocacy, are we seeing the reflexivity. Revising advocacy strategies.
- Karin: Intersectionality is a topic that can help to improve your advocacy strategies.
- Auma: The idea of a WhatsApp group that has immediate feedback is useful when you are starting to adapt to the framework. People will adapt the framework to their own context. Having exchanges with different consultants as you adapt to the platform, sounds very interesting.

For exchange visits and learning events:

- Anneke: About best practices of selected organisations. Quality is very diverse. we are looking for results. What are the outcomes. We need a case that has really happened.
- Karin: Organisations can really cement a good practice to try to win an award.
- Kerstin: In regard to the evidence. Are you looking for data, or videos?
- Anneke: if they come with an outcome, they can say it, but someone has to validate it.
- Willem: the reality is that we only have a few days and we want to do a lot. Can we move beyond perceptions? Not feasible. Organisations are trying to build a case. What you can do is see if different sources can confirm that. Get from different sources.
- Anneke: Preferably a party that is not benefiting from the project.
- Kahlile: Triangulation is a not separate things. Exchange visits are to learn from one another.
- Aisha: I'm kind of lost, because I've read the best practices. There is a lot of assumptions of intersectionality in proposals. What if the project has ended?
- Karin: The good practice case can be improved on the written part. If new ideas come up, these can be used for the new proposal, that can be submitted for the Voices for Inclusion Innovation Award.
- Innocent: We have to come in with humility. What interconnectedness they have done.
- Willem: I think these are all good points. What we all try to do, what we are actually asking people to step out of their comfort zone at two levels: organizational and personal. On organisational, it is natural that they will protect their practice and resist commentary. And in personal, you ask people to face their own prejudices. That is the biggest challenges.

Learning event:

- Karin: In the guidance I have written a suggestion for how to organise the learning event. For the outcome it is important that there is a brainstorm on how the new insights from the learning experience can be used for a new idea, a new proposal. A proposal written together of organisations or they can decide each by themselves. This can be developed and submitted for the Voices for Inclusion Innovation Award.

Communication:

- Linda: For me is a complex issue. Very relevant. Important that we have good content. For now we have a lot of text. Daniel will research that. For our content, it's important to have it very accessible, easy to swallow. We need quotes and things. Reserving an hour in two weeks for a call. Communication to the public is a big challenge. Doesn't have to be only video or photograph, can be quotes, or if you have something that is really interesting to share. We want discussion and interaction with this topic.
- Innocent: As interviews may take place in native language, we may then need professional translation to include in the visual documentation
- Willem: Or overdubs in English, and/or sign language

Any other business:

- Anneke: It would be good to have a memorandum of understanding with the organisations as to have their commitment to the project. We will draft an MoU for this and share with you.
- Kerstin: Lots of organisations have no English skills, so they cannot participate. This is something that could be considered for a potential follow-up of this project.