Voices for Just Climate Action
Terms of Reference: Impact stories for VCA countries

SouthSouthNorth (SSN) is seeking a set of consultants to write impact stories for the Voices for Just Climate Action (VCA) programme to enhance the visibility of the VCA programme and its results, and complement the programme monitoring, evaluation and learning (PMEL) processes. The consultants will be required to produce 5 impact stories for each of the 7 implementing countries. SSN is seeking individuals with strong communications and writing skills, and experience drafting impact stories or stories of change for organizations or programmes working on climate solutions, social inclusion and justice, lobby and advocacy, and/or conservation.

Three consultants will be selected:
1. English and French - covering Tunisia, Kenya & Zambia
2. Spanish and Portuguese - covering Bolivia, Paraguay & Brazil
3. Bahasa speaking - covering Indonesia

The deadline for submissions is 1 November 17h00 CAT.

Background and context

The VCA programme is a lobby and advocacy programme being implemented by the World Wide Fund for Nature Netherlands (WWF-NL), SouthSouthNorth (SSN), Akina Mama wa Afrika (AMwA), Slum Dwellers International (SDI), Fundación Avina and Hivos under the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs’ five-year strategic partnership: “Power of Voices”. The VCA programme aims to ensure that by 2025, local civil society and underrepresented groups will have taken on a central role as creators, facilitators, and advocates of innovative and inclusive climate solutions. Their inclusion is crucial for effective and lasting climate responses.

The programme's overall approach is to work with civil society to build widespread societal support for locally shaped climate solutions through an inclusive and rights-based approach. This includes building a broad-based climate alliance at the country level bridging divides (urban-rural, gender, youth) that amplify voices in unusual ways. In addition, it will influence national and global policies and financial flows (e.g., climate finance, private sector investments) in support of these locally shaped solutions. Finally, through a climate justice approach, the programme intends to see an expanded civic space where civil society voices, particularly indigenous and marginalised people, are heard on climate action. The VCA Programme is being implemented in 7 countries, including Tunisia, Kenya, Zambia, Bolivia, Paraguay, Brazil and Indonesia.

Impact stories

The VCA programme is a 5-year programme and is currently in the final 2 years of delivery. A significant amount of progress has been made by local organisations working in-country to advance the climate justice agenda. Therefore, these stories of change need to be captured and
communicated to ensure that their voices are heard and lessons learned. SSN requires external support to produce these ‘impact stories’.

Impact stories, or stories of change, are narrative statements that combines anecdotal and quantitative evidence to help readers understand the changes that resulted directly and indirectly from a project or program. The key to telling such stories of practice is to get beneath the outer reporting of events-in-sequence to surface the ‘inside story’. In order to create meaningful and long-lasting climate action for justice, we must tell complete stories. Not just about disasters and mass marches, but also about resilience and everyday acts of courage that allow us to learn and transform our work (see below relevant resources1).

**Objective**

The objective of this activity is to develop impact stories (5 per regional team) to enhance the visibility of the VCA programme and its results by putting selected outcomes2 of the VCA programme under the spotlight to increase visibility and enhance learning.

**Approach**

The approach for the impact stories will piggyback on the on-going VCA PMEL processes and reporting3. SSN will contract three independent consultants/writers who will be required to work alongside SSN and the Country Team representatives to connect to their local partners and facilitate the connections to stories. The consultants will co-develop the writing guidelines and ‘template’ for the stories with SSN, who will contextualize the stories within the VCA Theory of Change. The writer will be required to develop at least five stories per regional team across the VCA through interviews and source materials (where available). This will include the following steps.

1) Develop a standard template or set of interview questions to guide the impact stories (Consultant)

2) Provide guidance on key stories to investigate and contact details for interviewees, at least 2-3 per story to substantiate (SSN)

3) Interview projects and individuals online and produce the impact stories (Consultant)

4) Validate and review the stories with the regional team (SSN)

5) Finalise the story draft (Consultant)

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1 Relevant resources: 
The Barefoot Guide Approach to Writing Stories of Practice; 
Case Studies or Stories of Change - INTRAC

2 VCA uses outcome Harvesting as one of its monitoring and evaluation approaches in which programme managers and staff identify, formulate, verify, analyse and interpret ‘outcomes’ in programming contexts where relations of cause and effect are not fully understood. Outcomes are defined as changes in the "behaviour writ large" (such as actions, relationships, policies, practices) of one or more social actors influenced by an intervention.
6) Editorial review and design of each story (SSN)

Stories will be used externally on the VCA communications channels, as well as internally to bolster reporting and facilitate analysis of key issues and learning that is emerging.

Requirements

SSN will be contracting three consultants, unless one individual or organisation is able to cover multiple languages.

1. English and French - covering Tunisia, Kenya & Zambia
2. Spanish and Portuguese - covering Bolivia, Paraguay & Brazil
3. Bahasa speaking - covering Indonesia

The following rough timeline will be followed:

November 2023: Launch the call for proposals, review proposals and conduct interviews
December 2023: Contract individual in each region
January – May 2024: 5 stories / country to be completed

Both individuals or organisations are eligible to apply. All candidates will be required to have:

- Strong communications and writing skills, and specific experience drafting impact stories or stories of change for organisations or programmes (at least 5 years experience in communications and writing)
- Experience engaging with diverse groups and a keen sensitivity to local contexts.
- Availability to work on a strict delivery timeline within a complex environment and actors.

Proposal submission should include:

- CV and/or company information.
- Proposal motivating your alignment to the work and detailing how you would undertake the task and what approaches will be used.
- Budget, including day rates and total cost per story.
- Examples of similar pieces of writing - specifically impact stories or stories of change

To apply, kindly complete the above requirements and send all relevant documents to info@ssn.org with the following email title:

VCA Impact Stories Application, Language specification

Deadline for submission is 1 November 2023, 17h00 CAT. If you have any questions contact info@ssn.org.