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# ANNEX VI INTERIM NARRATIVE REPORT

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### List of acronyms used in the report

AIFO	Association Friends of Raoul Follereau
CAB	Christian Association of the Blind
CARR	CI : .: A .: .: CDI : 11 D:

CAPD Christian Association of Physically Disabled CRPD Convention on Rights of People with Disabilities

CSO Civile Society Organisation
DPOs Disabled People's Organisations

DWA. Deaf Women in Action
EU European Union
GoL Government of Liberia
HOH Hard of hearing

IEC Information Education and Communication

LGDA Life is Good Disabled Association

LNAB Liberia National Association of the Blind

MoH Ministry of Health

MOUMemorandum of UnderstandingMMCMonitoring Management CommitteeNCDNational Commission on Disabilities

NUOD National Union of the Organisations of the Disabled

ORS Oscar Romero School for the deaf

PWDs People with Disabilities

TV Tele Vision

UBAL United Blind Association of Liberia

UNCPD Unite National Convention on the Right of Persons with Disabilities

VOICE Voice of Inclusion and Civil Society Empowerment

WHO World Health Organization

WPSTS Woman of Purpose Skills Training School

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### 1. Description

- 1.1 Name of coordinator of the grant contract: Italian Association Amici di Raoul Follereau AIFO
- 1.2 Name and title of the contact person: Leonardo Volpetti, AIFO Liberia Country Coordinator
- 1.3 Name of <u>beneficiary(ies)</u> and <u>affiliated entity(ies)</u> in the action:
  - Williette Safehouse WSL (co-applicant)
  - National Commission on Disability NCD (Associate)
  - Oscar Romero School ORS (Associate)
  - National Union of Organization of the Disabled NUOD (Sub-grantee)

<u>1.4 Title</u> of the action: Voice of Inclusion and Civil Society Empowerment (VOICE)-Disable People Organisation Stepping up for people with disabilities rights in Liberia.

1.5 Contract number: CSO-LA 2020 / 421-002

1.6 Start date and end date of the reporting period: February 1,2021 - January 31, 2022

1.7 Target country: Liberia

1.8 Final beneficiaries &/or target groups (including numbers of women and men):

- Target group: 9 Disabled People's Organisations (DPOs) and the National Union of the Organisations of the Disabled (NUOD). In Montserrado County (3 DPOs and NUOD central office), Bomi County (3 DPOs and NUOD county delegation) and Nimba County (3 DPOs and NUOD county delegation), made of 1.047 people with disabilities (PWDs) of which 419 are women and 628 are men (within the DPOs).
- Target group: 90 deaf and HOH young persons. In Montserrado 30, Bomi County 30, and Nimba county 30 participating in livelihood and skills training (age from 15 to 35).
- Final beneficiary: All PWDs in Liberia (estimated 752.000 people), in particular all deaf and HOH young persons (estimated 52.640 people)
- Final beneficiary: Deaf and HOH young persons' family members of project beneficiaries (estimated 250.000 members).
- Final beneficiary: 10.000 Community dwellers in target communities.
- 1.9 Country(ies) in which the activities take place (if different from 1.7): Not applicable

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### 2. Assessment of the implementation of the action activities and its results

# 2.1 Executive summary of the action

### Global overview of the action's implementation for the reporting period

This interim narrative report provides a summary of the achievements of the project titled "Voices for Inclusion and Civil Society Empowerment (VOICE) - Disabled People Organisations stepping up for people with disabilities rights in Liberia", for the period from February 1<sup>st</sup> 2021 to January 31<sup>st</sup> 2022 (first project year). The project is implemented in the counties of Montserrado, Bomi and Nimba, in partnership with Williette Safehouse (co-applicant) along with other associates and sub grantees (ORS, NCD and NUOD). The primary direct beneficiaries of the project are deaf and hard of hearing persons (HOH) who are supported to ensure that they have equal access to work and employment opportunities.

As part of activities earmarked, the following went on successfully as planned during year one:

- Inception Phase of the project was fruitfully completed by laying out key benchmarks for its successful implementation, including the finalisation of project documents (Communication and Visibility Plan, Stakeholders Engagement Plan, M&E Framework, MOUs, etc.).
- Capacity Building of National Union of Organisations of the Disabled (NUOD) and Disabled People Organisations (DPOs). The institutional and management capacities of NUOD and DPOs were strengthened during the reporting period.
- Training for 9 DPOs on Advocacy management, following the principles of the UNCRPD.
- Community Radio and TV programme with the participation of deaf and HOH persons on PWDs right to work and employment.
- Fellowship programme for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Persons (in Montserrado and Nimba Counties).
- Vocational Training provided by Inclusive primary and Secondary Educational institutions.
- Sign Language Education for Deaf, Employers and Parent Support Groups at Community Level.

Some challenges faced with in year-1 caused a delay in starting some project activities. Therefore, AIFO did not concluded all project activities planned for year-1. However, these activities have already been realigned with activities of year-2 for their implementation without any additional cost.

# Level of achievement of the outcome(s), and the likeliness of reaching the final target(s) related to the outcome(s) at the end of the action.

The action started the process to empower the Disabled People's Organisations (DPOs), in specific their capacity and autonomy to engage for the socio-economic empowerment of the deaf and hard of hearing persons (HOH) in Liberia (*Outcome*). That is, the component of enhancing the capacity of Disabled People's Organizations (DPOs) were fully achieved with 9 DOPs. The autonomy for DPOs to engage for the socio-economic empowerment of the deaf and hard of hearing persons will be fully realised at the end of the action in Year 2, and reached the final targets of the indicators.

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Changes that have been brought to the intervention logic and to the Logical framework matrix, and justification for such changes (explanation in the 2.2 section), and the likeliness of reaching the final targets related to the impact in the future.

No changes have been brought to the intervention logic and to the LF matrix. However, the COVID 19 impacted negatively in the implementation of some activities planned in Year 1. The details of each no achieved outputs and activities are in 2.2 section, including the corrective measures to reach the final targets at the end of the action.

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#### 2.2. Results and activities

#### A. RESULTS

Global assessment of the results chain with general observations on the performance and the achievements of output, outcome and impact.

In Year-1 of the project, the assessment of the results chain showed that there have been significant achievements of three (3) outputs out of the four (4) outputs, which will lead to the achievement of the expected outcome, and contribute to the long-term impact.

To be more specific, under Output 1.1 the result chain confirmed that 9DPOs and NUOD members benefited from the institutional capacity training in the area of institutional management and advocacy across the three project counties.

There was also significant achievement under output. 1.3. The result showed that 20% of visualisations of awareness raising contents on right to work for PWDs shared on the net with positive feedback on PWDs right to work and employment. The 20% result also speaks to the reality that the awareness to the public on the rights of PWDs to work and employment beginning to resonate among the population.

Under output 1.4, 54 Deaf and HOH young persons improved employability and technical/vocational skills. This testified the number of deaf and HOH young persons who successfully completed livelihood and skills training under this output indicator. Based on this achievement, 60% of deaf and HOH young persons have improved their technical/vocational skills and employability. Now, 72% of trained deaf and HOH young person have access to employment opportunities, social services delivery and networking.

From the achievements of the mentioned outputs, it is worth mentioning that the Outcome Disabled People's Organisations (DPOs) enhanced their capacity and autonomy to engage for the socio-economic empowerment of the deaf and hard of hearing persons (HOH) in Liberia was already achieved at certain level in Year 1 of the project. With these achievements, it is anticipated that all deaf and hard of hearing persons in Liberia enjoy the rights to have equal access to work and employment leading to the impact/ overall objective of the project.

From the assumption and risk defined in the Logical framework particularly COVID-19 cases do not increase at the level to cause a country lockdown. Unfortunately, this assumption and risk mentioned occurred and negatively affected the level of achievements.

In the first Year, the project also experienced positive unforeseen result. After the project activities were launched in the three counties, the project initial target to train stakeholders, parents and community members for sign language education was thirty (30). However, with this target, there was an increased of the number of interested beneficiaries from 30 to 99 for the reporting period. This affected the result of the project positively.

Notwithstanding, the upsurge of COVID 19 cases across the country and the subsequent lock down of the country that resulted to the restriction of the population movement was also an unforeseen situation that also impacted some activities of the project negatively. Additionally, the long delay of NCD to sign the agreement with AIFO to implement a specific portion of the project activity has also influenced the result of the project negatively in first year.

As the result of these unforeseen situations particularly in the context of the rise in COVID 19 cases in the country. AIFO and its partners under the project adapted some practical steps by reviewing and revising the project activities planned to meet the current reality. The revised project activities plan shifted some of the activities that were already affected during the peak of the pandemic.

AIFO also put into place some preventive medical measures to safe guard both staff and beneficiaries against COVID-19 by following all GoL/WHO COVID 19 preventive regulations at both office and field levels. These adapted approaches were used to overcome the problem caused by the COVID 19.

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Level of achievement of all the results on the basis of the corresponding current value of the indicators.

**OUTCOME** (Oc): Disabled People's Organisations (DPOs) enhanced their capacity and autonomy to engage for the socio-economic empowerment of the deaf and hard of hearing persons (HOH) in Liberia.

It is observed that this Outcome has not been achieved in its fullness as planned. Nevertheless, there has been tremendous improvement as 9 DPOs capacities have been enhanced through capacity building training as a means to engage the socio- economic empowerment for deaf and hard of hearing persons in Liberia. From the start of the project activities, these 9 DPOs had no skill to advocate for the empowerment of deaf and hard of hearing persons.

At the result of this achievement, it is confirmed that the action performance will lead to the achievement of this outcome by the end of the project.

**Outcome indicator:** No. of DPOs autonomously and effectively engaged with key public and private stakeholders for economic empowerment of the deaf and HOH persons in Liberia. Baseline: 0. Target: 9 DPOs.

After one year the status of the indicator associated with the Outcome showed that though 9 Disabled People's Organisations (DPOs) enhanced their capacity, but zero number DPOs have not effectively engaged key public and private stakeholders for economic empowerment of the deaf and HOH persons in Liberia.

**Outcome indicator:** No. of DPOs proposals for PWDs employment related reforms, included in key public stakeholders' agenda. Baseline: 0. Target: at least 3 proposals for PWDs employment related reforms, included in key public stakeholders' agenda (2023).

The current value of indicator under the outcome, number of DPOs proposal for PWDs employment related to reforms, included in key public stakeholder is still zero.

**Outcome indicator:** No. of deaf and HOH persons which improved their advocacy competencies to become acknowledged counterparts within the disability federation in Liberia and the broader Liberian society. Baseline: 0. Target: At least 15 deaf and HOH persons improved their advocacy competences to become acknowledged counterparts within the disability federation in Liberia and the broader.

During the first year deaf and HOH persons have received basic training in the area of advocacy competencies to engage the disability federation in Liberia and the broader Liberian Society. One hundred persons have received training in the first year.

**OUTPUT 1.1:** 9 DPOs and NUOD members (100), in particular deaf and HOH persons, trained to advocate for PWDs economic and work rights on national and county level.

From the onset of the training, it was observed and proven that out of the 100 participants, 90% had no knowledge of the subject matter evident by their responses to questionnaires from the pre-test. At the end of the training, 85% of the 100 participants got to realised and learn new skills, knowledge and expressed that it was their first experience attending training on the UNCROD and Advocacy.

Interestingly, the involvements of female participation were exceptional as 42 were females and 58 males from the three sites noting that the males have always pushed to be ahead. Another indicator as achievement is, the Nimba OPDs/ PwDs have started to use the designed training practice advocacy plan to engage and build allies to ensure and reach a logical conclusion to erect a Crossing Pathway on the principal Street of Ganta to benefit both PwDs and non PwDs.

On the overall, the output was achieved with 9 DPOs and 10 members of NUOD were trained as the achievement. Base on this achievement of the output, the indicator has changed by meeting the target under this output.

Nine DPOs and NUOD members (100), in particular deaf and hard of hearing persons were trained to advocate for PWDs economic and work rights on national and county levels. That is, under this output,

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100 participants were trained from 9 DPOs and members of NUOD in both advocacy and institutional capacity building, thus meeting the 100 targets under this output.

Capacity Building of National Union of Organisations of the Disabled (NUOD) and Disabled People Organisations (DPOs): the institutional and management capacities of NUOD and DPOs were strengthened during the reporting period, through training courses as targeted, 100 participants were trained, with 3 DPOs each from the three project counties.

**Output 1.1 Indicator:** No. of DPOs that improved their institutional management capacities. Baseline: 0. Target: 9 DPOs.

On the overall, the indicator of this output has been achieved significantly under the period of the report. The number of DPOs that improved their institutional management capacities under the project was increased from zero to 9 DPOs. From the start of the project, these 9 DPOs had little knowledge to properly manage their various institutions within the counties. From all indications, these trained 9 DPOs including members of NUOD can now manage their respective institution at a substantial level.

With this result, it is an evident that there have been positive changes in the area of improvement of institutional management capacities. Under this indicator, there has been no underperformance in reference to the assumption and risk defined in the LF (COVID-19 cases do not increase at the level to cause a country lockdown).

**Output 1.1 Indicator:** No. of DPO members trained by NUOD that advocate for PWDs economic and work rights; disaggregated by geographical area (national and county level and gender; disaggregated by PWDs and deaf and HOH persons. Baseline: 0. Target: At least 20 of trained DPOs members are deaf and HOH persons.

The DPOs have already been identified and preparation has been made for the training to take place in February 2022. Therefore, the numbers of DPOs that were to be trained by NUOD to advocate for PWDs for economic and work rights remains unchanged.

**Output 1.1 Indicator:** No. of trained deaf and HOH persons actively interacting with NUOD and DPOs at national and county level. Baseline 0. Target: At least 15 of trained deaf and HOH DPOs persons actively interacting with NUOD and DPOs at national and county level.

Deaf and hard of hearing persons are being engaged to be trained to fully interact with NUOD and DPOs in the second quarter of 2022. Therefore, the current value of the indicators remains at zero.

**OUTPUT 1.2:** 9 DPOs and NUOD members (100), in particular deaf and HOH persons, engaged in the development of advocacy and lobby strategies to influence policy-makers at local and national level.

Under the outcome, Disabled People's Organisations (DPOs) enhanced their capacity and autonomy to engage for the socio-economic empowerment of the deaf and hard of hearing persons (HOH) in Liberia. In the first phase of the project, 9 Disabled People's Organizations capacity was enhanced from August to September 2021.

Following the capacity enhancement and feedback received from these (DPOs there have been some improvement at the level of these DPOs structurally. It is also observed that some deaf and hard of hearing persons are now been empowered to engage in the socio-economic opportunities in the communities and the lager society in Liberia.

*Training for DPOs on Advocacy and UNCRPD:* As the target, 9 DPOs with 90 representatives from the 3 project counties and 10 NUOD members participated in a training on Advocacy and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of persons with disabilities.

Nevertheless, the target and indicators of Output 1.2 will be shifted to Year 2 for implementation in consistence with activities targets across the three project counties without an additional cost. The current indicators for Output 1.2 are follow;

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**Output 1.2 Indicator:** No. of advocacy actions and lobby strategies developed by DPOs and proposed to key public and private stakeholders to influence policy-makers at local and national level. Baseline: 0. Target: At least one specific context advocacy action and related lobby strategy developed in each County and at national level.

DOPs capacities have been built already to carry out the advocacy actions and lobbing strategies development in an effort to achieve this output in year 2. The current value of Output 1.2 remains at zero.

**Output 1.2 Indicator:** % of advocacy actions and lobby strategies developed by DPOs, proposed to key public and private stakeholders to influence policy-makers at local and national level, organised and implemented with active contribution of deaf and HOH persons. Baseline: 0%. Target: At least 50% of the total actions of advocacy and lobby strategies developed by DPOs organised and implemented with active contribution of deaf and HOH persons.

None DPOs capacities have been developed in the area of advocacy and lobbying for the achievement of this indicator in year 2 of the project. Therefore, the current value of the indicator remains unchanged.

**OUTPUT 1.3:** Raised awareness of the general public, as well as national and local decision-makers regarding the right of PWDs to work and employment.

For the reporting period, it is noticed and proven through the pre-evaluation results reported that 80% of the participants did not have any knowledge about how to report and monitor human rights violation. However, the post evaluation result reflected that at least 53.8% reported changes in their knowledge about human rights violation monitoring and reporting while 30.8% reported little knowledge.

As part of the achievement, 15 young deaf and hard of hearing persons were trained to raise awareness to the general public, as well as national and local decision-makers regarding the rights of PWDs to work and be employed. The training of 15 young and deaf and hard of hearing persons under this output also provided the opportunity to these young deaf and hard of hearing persons to directly interact with the public to highlight their plight and to find a resolution from policy makers and public in general.

Community Radio and TV programme with the participation of deaf and HOH persons on PWDs right to work and employment: The project's IEC activity, in particular the radio, TV and social media program for young deaf and hard of hearing persons, commenced during the reporting period. As target, 15 young deaf and hard of hearing persons participated in 5 days training programme.

**Output 1.3 Indicator:** % of total phone calls to IEC radio and TV programmes receiving positive comments on PWDs right to work and employment. Baseline: 0%. Target: At least 60% of total phone calls receive positive comments regarding the right of PWDs to work and employment.

During this report period, the value of output 1.3 indicator has not changed and the value remains at 0%. This is due to the delay of the start of IEC radio and TV programme to have generated phone calls and receive a positive comment on the rights of PWDs to work and employment.

**Output 1.3 Indicator:** % of total visualisations of awareness raising contents on right to work for PWDs shared on the net with positive feedback on PWDs right to work and employment. Baseline: 0%. Target: At least 60% of total visualisations receive positive feedback regarding the right of PWDs to work and employment.

The current value of the output indicator has changed from 0% to 20% with the achievement of 20% against 60% of indicator target. This also proved that there has been performance under this output marching the achievement for the reporting period.

**OUTPUT 1.4:** 90 Deaf and HOH young persons improved employability and technical/vocational skills

At the beginning of the project, it was observed that within the deaf and hard of hearing community many of the beneficiaries had no technical/vocational skill to seek employment opportunities. More besides, many them never had basic or formal education skill to properly communication with employers and parents.

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However, in the reporting period, it is observed and proven that 36 of them benefited from fellowship programme and 54 also received vocational and skill training and sign language education under the programme.

- **Fellowship programme for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Persons**: the project realised the completion of the first phase of fellowship programme for young deaf and hard of hearing in two of the three project counties with 36 beneficiaries were reached against the 54 targeted beneficiaries.
- Vocational Training provided by Inclusive primary and Secondary Educational institutions: during the reporting period, as target, 54 beneficiaries benefited from vocational and skill training programme for young deaf and hard of hearing persons across the three project counties.
- Sign Language Education for the Deaf, Employers and Parent Support Groups at Community Level: As the target, 54 young deaf and hard of hearing persons benefitted from hands-on sign language education training in the project counties during the reporting period. A total of 99 employers and parent support groups also benefitted from similar training thus demonstrating the project's commitment towards ensuring a smooth bridge of communication between deaf persons and the larger community. This proves an unforeseen positive impact on the project because more people have the desire to learn the sign language.
- Trade Fairs to showcase Talents and Skills of Deaf and HOH persons and facilitate their networking with employers: the trade fairs events have been finalised and program is expected to be held in the month of March 2022. The event will showcase the innate talents of deaf and hard of hearing persons following months of training in different fields including cosmetology, hair braiding, and carpentry among others. However, as target for Year-1, the target of three trade fairs was not achieved but rather to be achieved in Year 2.

At the end of the reporting period, 54 Deaf and Hard of hearing young persons improved employability and technical/vocational skills against the 90 deaf and hard of hearing young persons. As planned under Output 1.4 in Year1, 54 deaf and hard of hearing young persons received basic employment skill building. That means, the target of 54 for Year-1 was achieved.

**Output 1.4 Indicator:** No. of deaf and HOH young persons who successfully completed livelihood and skills training. Baseline: 0. Target: 90 deaf & HOH young persons.

On the basic of corresponding current value, the total number of 54 deaf and hard of hearing persons successfully complement livelihood and skill training in Bomi, Nimba and Montserrado. Counties. This also showed that there was significant change in the output indicator from zero to 54. Thus, demonstrating the achievement of the input indicator for the reporting period, with 54 out of 90 deaf and HOH young people successfully completed livelihood and skills training.

**Output 1.4 Indicator:** No. of deaf and HOH young persons who improved their technical/vocational skills and employability. Baseline: 0. Target: At least 90% of trained deaf and HOH young persons improved their technical/vocational skills and employability.

The total number of 54 deaf and hard of hearing young persons have improved their technical/vocation skills and employability. As indicated in the current value, there has been a substantial change in the number from zero to 54 deaf and hard of hearing young persons who have improved their technical skill, in the area of tailoring, soap making, carpentry, and cosmetology. That is, 60% out of 90% deaf and HOH young persons improved their technical/vocational skills and employability. From the result, this showed that there is no underperformance of this indicator for the period.

**Output 1.4 Indicator:** % of trained deaf and HOH young persons that had access to employment opportunities, social services delivery and networking. Baseline: 0%. Target: at least 75%.

The current value indicates that 72% of deaf and hard of hearing young persons now have access to employment opportunities, social service delivery and networking. From all indications, this indication has performed thus changing the indicator from 0% to 72% with the training of 54 young deaf and hard of hearing persons across the three counties. The achievement of this indicator for the reporting period

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is 72% out of 75% trained deaf and HOH young persons that had access to employment opportunities, social services delivery and networking.

### How the Action has mainstreamed cross-cutting issues

The project has mainstreamed cross-cutting issues as it relates to human rights violation against people with disabilities.

That is, it is proven that the rights of people with disabilities have been violated by duties bearers in the context of the rights to Work and employment, equal education, communication, etc in line with the United Nation Convention of the Rights of People with Disability that was ratified by the Liberian Government in 2012. This has been highlighted with stakeholders during meetings in project counties and at national level. This also has been welcomed by stakeholders and community members with the anticipation that there will be some positive changes. There are also plans to elevate these issues at the highest level to further discuss the commitments made.

At these meetings, the issue of democracy was also highlighted particularly in the area of decisions making that effect the entire society whether positive or negative. It is worth to mention that people with disabilities are denied to participate democratically in decisions making at community, county and national levels. The worst of it, the deaf and hard of hearing persons are also being marginalised within the very disabled community, thus denying them to take leadership position within many of the DPOs in the project counties and around the country.

Interestingly, the project activities have redirected the thoughts of the trained 9 DOPs members to treat each another equally for the coexistence of all. The positive change must start within the DPO before being elevated to the highest society.

### **B. ACTIVITIES**

Some activities were underperformed due to the increase of COVID-19 cases in the Country during Year 1 that affected nearly all segment of the population negatively.

However, for corrective measure, these activities and budget will now be realigned for Year 2, starting from February 2022. If there will be another resurgent of COVID-19 cases in the country, there will be more medical preventive measures consider to reach the final target of the action.

OUTPUT 1.1. 9 DPOs and NUOD members (100), in particular deaf and HOH persons, trained to advocate for PWDs economic and work rights on national and county level.

### Activity 1.1.1. Institutional capacity building training of NUOD and their member DPOs.

For the first year, nine (9) targeted Disabled People Organizations and NUOD members under the project benefited from the residential institutional capacity building training in the three project counties. The training ran for twelve (12) working days from August 10-27,2021.

The selection of the nine (9) DPOs was based on the developed criteria by NUOD, in collaboration with AIFO:

- 1. Be registered with NUOD with a certificate of accreditation
- 2. Be legally registered with government
- 3. Have bye-law and constitution
- 4. Have an organigram of your organization
- 5. Be in good standing with NUOD in respect to due payment
- 6. Be knowledgeable of the Unite National Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCPD)
- 7. Have a visible office space within a particular county of operation

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- 8. Have a bank account along with the following policy: Financial Policy, human resource, Code of conduct and procurement policy
- 9. Have a membership of 50 and above within that particular county of operation

Ten (10) active or motivated members each represented the nine (9) selected DPOs at the training, while ten (10) members also represented NOUD from its national Office thus bringing together the total number of 100 participants (42 females and 58 males) across the three counties.

DPOs that participated in the training from the three counties are:

### Nimba County

- 1. Nimba Disabled Community (NDC)
- 2. Christian Association of the Blind (CAB)
- 3. Life is Good Disabled Association (LGDA)

### Montserrado County

- 1. United Blind Association of Liberia (UBAL)
- 2. Christian Association of Physically Disabled (CAPD)
- 3. Deaf Women in Action (DWA)

### **Bomi County**

- 1. Liberia National Association of the Blind (LNAB)
- 2. Christian Association of the Blind (CAB)
- 3. Group of 77 (G77)

Based on an organisational capacity assessment guided by AIFO's "Diagnostic Study on Disabled People's Organisations in 2018, the training was concentrated on four main strategy topics namely

- Fund Raising,
- Financial Management
- Project Management
- **❖** Report Writing

Two hired professional and experienced consultants that rollout the training across the three counties facilitated the training. Each of the topic lasted for a full day using various methodologies such as, PowerPoint presentation, group discussion, question and answers and role-play throughout the training session. Prior to the trainings, there were three different inception meetings held with DPOs in the three counties, Bomi, Montserrado and Nimba Counties at the beginning of the project. Each of the meeting lasted for hours as a means of providing detail information about the project and to get each of the DPOs involve into the project activities and also to know their roles and respective responsibilities at both national and county levels.

In February 2021 AIFO-Liberia Country Director, Melany Oey and staff of AIFO Reginal Office held an inception meeting with stakeholders, including (Local County Authority, Women of Purpose Skill training Center, Administration of Danyee Community School and DPOs) in Nimba county.

Meanwhile, during the meeting each institution was informed about its role and responsibility under the project implementation. At the meeting, it was also agreed that under this project through the project budget, AIFO will underwrite all financial cost associated for all project students within the duration of the skill training programme at the training centre. The training centre also agreed to work closely with AIFO for the achievement of the project target under the skill training programme.

On March 24, 2021, AIFO met with NUOD Bomi Chapter to provide initial ideas on the VOICE project and solicit information on the current realities of PWDs in the county. Representatives of CAB, G-77 and LNAB were in attendance. The team also wanted to understand the structure of NUOD in the county and its operations as part of VOICE Project inception phase activity. It was not clear whether there's a separate DPO for the deaf as it's done in other counties. These were key findings from the meeting with the leadership of NUOD in the county which was composed predominantly of males.

No government support to NUOD in the county

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- Not a single NGO has provided programmes to improve their lives
- Individually, some members are helping themselves through gardening, tailoring, baking etc.
- There's no activity or meeting Centre for PWDs in the county
- The chapter constitutes approximately 1000 members with disabilities
- No office space for NUOD in the county
- Recognition of NUOD is very weak

At the end of the meeting with NUOD Bomi County representatives, they expressed their thanks and appreciation to AIFO-WS team for the visit, and appealed for assistance to enable them to be more productive and autonomous within the society as for too long they have been referred to as baggers, and at times they are disesteemed by other society members.

The project team did establish a new relationship with DPOs in the county understanding their challenges and providing an opportunity for the project to help find solutions to most of their problems. The project will help strengthen NUOD's capacity in this part of the country to help provide more support to PWDs in the county. An important aspect will be the stakeholder's engagement plan understanding the roles of different stakeholders in the county to effect change.

In continuation of the inception meeting with partners under the VOICE Project, a meeting was also held on the 30<sup>th</sup> March, 2021 with NUOD and NCD Montserrado The aim of the meeting was to provide an over view of NUOD and NCD roles and expected results under the VOICE project as direct beneficiary and implementing partner in collaboration with NCD. During the meeting NUOD also voiced out their interminable participation as AIFO had over the years been their major partner within the INGO sector that always gave them supports through capacity building, logistic and financial donations.

At the end of the meeting, both NCD and NUOD promised to give their inputs on the draft MoU once the copy is shared with them. There were over ten (15) persons at the meeting, including NUOD President, NUOD Vice President for Administration, and NUOD Vice President for Operation, NUOD Finance Officer, NUOD Secretary and Executives of NCD along with AIFO VOICE Project Manager and Communication Officer.

During this period, AIFO also supported NUOD for the development of a training manual to rollout training for DPOs on advocacy, the United Nation Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities (CRPD) and other legal human rights instruments under the subgrant agreement.

# Activity 1.1.2. Training for DPOs on advocacy, the United Nation Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities (CRPD) and other legal human rights instruments.

The advocacy training brought together 100 participants from across the three (3) Project Counties with ten (10) persons each representing the 9 DPOs and 10 members from NUOD. The selection of these DPOs were in accordance with the criteria mentioned in 1.1.1 activities being developed by NUOD with the support of AIFO.

A hired professional advocacy consultant that rollout the training for nine (9) days across the three counties conducted the training. The training for DPOs on Advocacy and CRPD was residential and it was conducted at county level. Each of the training session lasted for three working days across the three counties (Bomi, Nimba, and Montserrado). In Bomi and Nimba Counties 30 participants were gathered at each training session and 40 participants were also gathered in Montserrado County. Below are dates of training per county;

- Nimba County-August 25-27,2021
- Bomi County-August 31- September 2,2021
- Monsetarrdo County- September 7-9,2021

From the pre-test conducted, the result showed that 90% of the participants had no basic knowledge and skill on CRPD and advocacy. At the conclusion of the training, the post test result also showed that 85% have an improved knowledge and skills on CRPD and Advocacy. On the overall, out of the 100 beneficiaries that attended this training session across the three (3) counties, 58% was males and 42%

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was females. The methodology used for the training included, group works, power point presentation. Plenary discussion, role-play and participatory base on questions and answers.

There were specifics topics discussed during the training including,

- Advocacy Tools
- Advocacy Strategy
- Advocacy Techniques
- UNCRPD and other International, Regional and National Human Rights Instruments.

The skills and acknowledge acquired by participants have started to influence the society positively. In Bomi County, DPOs have engaged Local Radio Stations Managers for slot on the radio to advocacy for PWDs in Bomi County. Through their engagements, Radio Bomi and Radio Puma have provided airtime for DPOs to sensitize the population about the rights and capacities of PWDs within the society.

The feedbacks received from the DPOs advocacy on the two radio stations beginning to have some positive impact. That is, in Bomi County, stakeholders including local authorities have started to provide space for PWDs at the table of decision making of the county and there are commitments for more positive actions.

# Activity 1.1.3. Specific training provided by NUOD to DPOs to advocate for PWDs economic and work rights on national and county level (sub-granting).

NUOD has been sub-granted to implement this component of the project activity across the three (3) project Counties. Unfortunately, due to the increase of COVID-19 in year-1 the activity was not started. However, it is now planned to be implemented in quarter-1 of Year -2.

# Activity 1.1.4. NUOD meetings to liaise with DPOs and PWDs for better representation within the existing DPO structures on county-level (sub-granting).

Due to the no achievement of activity 1.1.3 by NUOD with the challenges being outlined, meetings to liaise with DPOs and PWDs were not held. However, these meetings will now take place in year -2 of the project after proper adjustments.

# OUTPUT 1.2: 9 DPOs and NUOD members (100), in particular deaf and HOH persons, engaged in the development of advocacy and lobby strategies to influence policy-makers at local and national level.

# Activity 1.2.1. Follow-up meetings managed by NUOD with DPOs to establish local advocacy actions.

The follow up meetings by NUOD with DPOs to establish local advocacy action was not also achieved in year-1 due to the challenge posed by the increasement of the COVID-19.

Nevertheless, to realise the achievement of this activity, it has been shifted to year-2 without an additional cost and it will commence in April 2022.

# Activity 1.2.2. Roundtable dialogues facilitated by NCD and NUOD to raise awareness with target audiences (including policy makers, local businesses and private sector) for better employment integration of deaf and HOH persons.

This component of the project was not realized as planned for year-1. This was due to the increase of the COVID-19 pandemic cases in the country. That restricted the gathering and movement of more people across the country thus affecting the start of this activity negatively in the three Project Counties. In addition, the signature of the MoU with NCD, in charge for the National Roundtable dialogues, was not completed in year one (see below about the risks). However, to achieve this goal, the project action plan was revised and this activity has been realigned as activity for year -2.

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OUTPUT 1.3: Raised awareness of the general public, as well as national and local decision-makers regarding the right of PWDs to work and employment.

# Activity 1.3.1. IEC Programme: Community Radio and TV programme with the participation of deaf and HOH persons focussed on PWDs right to work and employment.

One of the key components under the VOICE project is Information, Education and Communications Programme (IEC). The IEC programme focuses on Community Radio and TV (Facebook online and traditional TV) with the participation of deaf and hard of hearing (HOH) persons. It focuses on PWDs rights to work and to be employed as well as health, education, and others. The objectives of the IEC Programme are:

- The Information, Education and Communication Programme will achieve the following objectives:
- Promoting a sustainable long-standing partnership between National Union of Organisations of the Disabled/the Disabled People Organisations and Community radios and TV networks.
- Raising awareness of the general public on the issue of persons with disabilities' rights, with focus on themes raised by the project, in order to promote a behaviour change.
- Raising the profile of the role played by Civil Society and Disabled People Organisations in policymaking processes, increasing their legitimacy and credibility.
- Ensuring the spread of good practices promoted by the VOICE project.
- Giving deaf and hard of hearing persons a space to promote their advocacy campaigns, initiatives and invocations.

The IEC Programme was launched and its activities were implemented as planned during year 1. In particular:

# Human Rights and Media Engagement Training (Radio, Television & Social Media) for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Persons.

A weeklong training for young deaf and hard of hearing persons was held from December 13-17, 2021 at the AM. Kyne Resource Center located at Tubman High, 12th Street, Sinkor-Monrovia. The general objective of the training was to raise awareness on the rights of people with disabilities, in particular deaf and hard of hearing persons to influence decision making through the usage of several media channels: radio, television and social media.

### **Training Aims**

- Build a positive perception of deaf and hard of hearing persons in the mainstream media in Liberia through a rights-based approach in portraying persons with disabilities
- Build the capacity of young deaf and hard of hearing persons to enforce awareness raising on disability through the usage of the media
- Minimize false and negative perceptions made in covering stories relating to disability with emphasis on the deaf and hard of hearing;
- Increase the quantity and quality of talk shows or news around disability issues

# Expected outcomes

- Learners are able to understand basic human rights issues concerning people with disabilities (deaf and hard of hearing persons in particular) thereby promoting HRBA for persons with disabilities;
- Learners can reliably demonstrate the usage of media outlets (radio, television, social media) to promote the inclusion of deaf and hard of hearing persons in the social life and development of their local communities;
- Leaners are able to use voice recorder and video recorder for communications and advocacy

## Methodology

This training had a two-tiered approach: the first was to provide participants with a good theoretical basis from which to approach the issues, the second was to allow participants to apply the knowledge gained through practical exercises and group work. The group exercises allowed participants to apply

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what they have learned. Participants had an opportunity to appear live in studios to demonstrate knowledge gained. Q& A sessions as well as role-plays were also factored as part of the process. Training essentials were done in a form of power point presentations. The training also adapted a number of case studies which demonstrated how to apply the various concepts, methods and tools presented in the different presentations.

Fifteen (15) participants from Montserrado County participated in the training. An experienced facilitator in the development sector specifically on issues relating to disabilities, human rights and journalism was contracted by AIFO to facilitate the 5-day training that several topics throughout the training course were presented through theory and practical. Suitable topics relating to the UNCRPD were earmarked as part of the training. For example, Historicity and Background of the UNCRPD, Human Rights Monitoring and Reporting among many other related topics. Additional topics related to social media, Usage of Media equipment to include camera and recorder as well as basic Journalism skills were also facilitated. During the training, AIFO-Liberia Communications Officer and focal person of the VOICE radio and TV program also provided technical support. Throughout the training, strong emphasis was placed on awareness raising on the issues affecting persons with speech and hearing impairment and the promotion of human rights for their well-being. One Sign Language Interpreter was hired for the training.

#### Outcomes/Evaluation

The training adapted two levels of evaluation. One related to a pre-evaluation and the other related to a post evaluation exercise. The first level which was the pre-evaluation exercise was intended to assess the level of understanding of the participants with regards to different thematic topics covered during the training. The idea was also to tailor training presentations/interventions to the needs and understanding of the participants as a way of ensuring effective outcome of the training exercise. The second level of evaluation was the post evaluation exercise. This level captures the immediate reaction of the participants after the entire training exercise. It assesses learners' satisfaction after the training. The two levels of evaluation were conducted using questionnaires that were also tailored to the different presentations. Below is an outcome of the pre and post evaluation exercise.

## Pre and Post Evaluation Analysis

As far as broadcast Journalism is concerned, at least 46.7% of the participants had no knowledge related to this topic prior to the training but after the training, about 63.4% of the participants reported basic knowledge in broadcast Journalism.



Pre evaluation results also reported that 80% of the participants did not have any knowledge about how to report and monitor human rights violation. However, the post evaluation result reflected that at least 53.8% reported changes in their knowledge about human rights violation monitoring and reporting while 30.8% reported little knowledge.

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Participants of the training made the following recommendations:

- Journalists should be trained in basic sign language. We could work along with sign language interpreters.
- A simplified version of the UNCRPD should be developed and given to the radio program participants
- AIFO should provide support to cases of human rights violations reported in the field
- Stigmatization against PWDs should be minimized if not eradicated
- There should be refresher training to test knowledge
- Interest of PWDs should be highlighted in all of the communities of the VOICE project
- Roll-out of radio/tv program should begin
- Knowledge gained should be taught to other DPO members established by deaf and HOH persons
- Participants will network for the success of the project
- Media institutions should be fully supportive to the program's implementation

At the end of the training, participants were fully knowledgeable about human rights issues related to disabilities and were abreast about the fundamentals of journalism, social media and how to use different radio and TV equipment to raise their voices. Participants promised to be fully supportive of the radio, TV and social media program of the VOICE project; thereby, ensuring sustainable results.

### Partnership with the Media.

**TV Partnership:** As outlined in the project document, TV (both online and traditional TV), AIFO Liberia has entered into a partnership agreement with Sky TV, Channel 6 to run a one-year TV program that comes on every second and last Friday of every month and with repeats on second and last Sunday of each month. The TV program is a 35-minute program that is hosted by deaf and hard of hearing persons with the aid of a Sign Language Interpreter. The program is titled: "VOICE".

**Radio Partnership:** Also, a partnership with the United Methodist Radio, ELUM 98.7FM has been signed to host the 45min-1hr VOICE radio program on the station on every first and third Friday of every Month and repeats on every second and last Friday of each month. As it is for the TV program, the deaf and hard of hearing persons serve as the host of the program and with the aid of a Sign Language Interpreter who helps to interpret the communications between the program hosts, the public and the guest of the program.

**Online TV Partnership:** As an institution that is passionate to support the work of persons with disabilities, AIFO Liberia saw it as opportunity to sign an MOU with SATEC TV to do all live streaming of all VOICE radio and TV presentations and share with Facebook users. The online TV will help the program reach more people outside of Montserrado, and Liberia in general.

### **Jingle Production**

Considering the design of the Radio and TV program, jingles have been produced to play on ELUM, on Sky TV and radio as a means of helping to introduce and increase the program awareness.

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# OUTPUT 1.4: 90 Deaf and HOH young persons improved employability and technical/vocational skills

# Activity 1.4.1. Fellowship programme including life-skills, literacy, and social entrepreneurship training, and coaching for deaf and HOH persons.

The fellowship program is designed for fellows in Montserrado, Bomi and Nimba Counties and it is intended to enhance the knowledge, skills, and capacity of deaf and HOH youths. This provides them with opportunities for sustainable development as a means of developing a sense of autonomy, self-confidence, and the ability to think beyond their immediate daily survival and become transformational leaders in the society.

Consequently, during the reporting period, a total number of fifty-four (54) fellowship students (32 males, 22 females) were identified and (34) were subsequently enrolled into the programme in Montserrado and Nimba Counties process with the exception of Bomi County.

All of the selected (54) students are either deaf and/or hard of hearing persons. The exercise was intended to orientate students on the overview of the VOICE inclusive of the fellowship program overall objectives, teaching techniques/schedules and their commitment towards successful enrolment, and completion of the programme.

The fellowship courses focussed on twelve (12) different life skills, literacy and social entrepreneurship courses, to include;

- Work Ethics
- Conflict Resolution
- Public Speaking
- Spotlight
- Developing Self-confidence
- Leadership,
- Hospitality
- Braille Literacy
- Introduction to Computer
- Financial Literacy
- Disability and Inclusion
- Entrepreneurship.

Each of the fellowship programme was conducted in two of the three project counties, as planned. In Montserrado County, the fellowship programme was held at the SMART Liberia Event Center and in Nimba at Danyee Community School. The fellowship classes started in June, 2021 to November 2021. Under the reporting period, a total of three fellowship teachers (2 males, 1 female), two teachers' aides and two Sign-language interpreters were recruited and hired to rollout the fellowship programme across the two counties. There are also members of the disability community.

Additionally, a three-day staff training was also conducted for both the fellowship teachers and sign-language interpreters and teachers' aides to orientate staff about the approved fellowship curriculum and teaching strategies/methodologies. The training was conducted by Williette Safehouse Team.

# Activity 1.4.2. Vocational training provided by inclusive and strategic partnerships with primary and secondary education institutes.

In Montserrado County, Williette Safehouse in partnership with professional vocational trainers identified key vocational training courses based on practical needs assessment from all eighteen (18) deaf and hard of hearing persons of the project. Hence, 6 females and 12 males were enrolled into the vocational programme. Three (3) different vocational training courses were identified. They include, tailoring, beauty-care, and barbing.

The vocational training courses were intended to prepare beneficiaries for specialised occupations as mentioned above. It further aims at building their capacities towards accessing the job market and professionally competing with others in the job market.

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Therefore, during the reporting period, the project achieved the identification of vocational trainers and training site. Moreover, some partnership agreements/MOUs with vocational training institute/individual were developed and signed.

These activities were followed by the vocational training classes in Montserrado County that lasted for three months, (September to November 2021), respectively. At the end of the vocational classes, a performance evaluation was conducted for each of the student, which proved that all of the eighteen (18) students adequately developed their vocational skills for the job market, thus linking them to potential employers within the County and awaiting graduation.

In Nimba County, the team also recruited another eighteen (18) students (12 males and 6 females) were enrolled into the vocational and skill training programme. These students had no apprenticeship skills to be absorbed into the current job market. To make these students employable, AIFO worked with both students and parents/guardians to identify the available job market at community level. At the end of the process, four (4) vocations/courses were identified for the eighteen (18) students. They are; tailoring, soap making, carpentry and cosmetology.

The skills training programme was conducted for six (6) months and students were taught basic skills through a practical demonstration. The Women of Purpose Skills Training Center in Saclepea, Nimba County, was hired to rollout the skill trainings for the eighteen (18) beneficiaries. The sign language teachers also aided with the interpretation of the sign language for students and vocational teachers at the training Center. At the closed of the skill-training programme, the eighteen (18) students were evaluated and satisfied by the TVET Center based on the training outlines for graduation. The eighteen (18) students were also linked with potential employers at community level for possible employment or internship while awaiting graduation.

In Bomi County, the vocational skill training started as planned for six (6) months with another cluster of eighteen (18) students (females 7 and males 11) being enrolled into the vocational skill training session with specific courses being taught. The courses are; Cosmetology, Pastry, Tailoring, Soap Making, etc. The Mary's Meal School Campus in Bomi County is being used as the training Center with hired trainers providing trainings for the beneficiaries.

The end evaluation result also showed that these beneficiaries successfully completed the six (6) months required training courses. These students have started producing products to be sold on the local market to sustain the acquired skill. These students were also linked with potential employers awaiting graduation.

Largely, the total number of 54 students received vocational skill training in different disciplines as mentioned above in the three project counties. The total of three (3) vocational skill-training sessions were conducted across the three counties in Year1.

# Activity 1.4.3. Sign language education lessons for deaf and hard of hearing persons who have little or no formal education, employers and parent support groups at community level.

The sign language education is one of the main components of the project, fifty-four (54) students between the ages of 15-35 were identified and selected in Bomi, Montserrado and Nimba Counties. The selection of these beneficiaries was based on the willingness, motivation and commitment demonstrated by the beneficiaries, parents or guidance to support the students during and after the end of the project. During the process, professional sign language instructors were recruited, hired, trained and subsequently the sign language training started across the three counties. For the effectiveness and efficiency of the training sessions, the fifty-four (54) students were divided into group of nine (9) students with different classes being used independently from Mondays to Friday's weekdays for the sign language training session.

The sing language training session started with beginner and advance educational activities based on the student's educational level with the following topics being taught:

- 1. History of Sign Language
- 2. Greetings
- 3. Counting Numbers

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- 4. Approved MoE lessons (Math, Science, English, and History etc.)
- 5. Finger spelling
- 6. Manual Alphabets
- 7. Days of the week

Out of the fifty-four (54) students, there were twenty-two (22) females and thirty-two (32) males who were actively involved into the sign language training in the three counties.

In Nimba County, AIFO identified and selected the Danyee Community School as the sign language training Center and a MoU was also signed between AIFO and them to use two of its classes for the purpose of the sign language training. The sign language training in Bomi and Montserrado Counties was also conducted by ORS an associate partner under the VOICE Project. The Mary's Meals School Campus and St. Thomas Episcopal Church were also used as the Sign language training Centers for students.

The sign language education was also taught in year -1 for stakeholders, employers, parents and local community members across the three counties. The training focused on beginner's sign language education with concentration on the followings;

- 1. Alphabets
- 2. Greetings
- 3. knowing the parts of the human body
- 4. Numbers counting

As the learning of the sign language interest grew among the population within these communities, the number of participants increased from 30 as the project target to 99 across the three counties.

The participants were dominated by females with 66 females and 33 males. In Bomi and Montserrado Counties, the sign language training for stakeholders was conducted by Oscar Romero School of the deaf using the St. Thomas Episcopal Church on Camp Johnson Road and Mary's Meal School campus in Bomi as training venues. While in Nimba County, AIFO also conducted the stakeholder's sign language training at the Danyee Community School campus.

# Activity 1.4.4. Trade Fairs to showcase talents and skills of deaf and HOH persons and facilitate networking between employers deaf and HOH persons

The trade fairs for year-1 was not realized. This was due to vocational skill training activities delay that proposed the trade fairs timing resulting to none achievement in time of this project activity—across in the three counties. However, the preparation of trade fairs has been finalised and two programmes are expected to be held in March 2022. The event will showcase the innate talents of deaf and hard of hearing persons following months of training in different fields including tailoring, soap making, cosmetology, hair braiding, and carpentry among others.

# Risks that might have jeopardised the realisation of some activities and explain how they have been tackled

- National Roundtable Dialogues. The unwillingness of NCD to sign the associate agreement is a serious challenge that puts the realisation of this activity at risk. NCD had signed a Letter of intent during the feasibility study, but after that there was a change in the leadership of NCD, with the appointment of a new Executive Director. This brought to a re-evaluation of NCD commitments in Voice project. The reasons and the mitigation measures are described below, in point 3.3 (Relationship with Associates). At the same time, AIFO started to evaluate the possibility of an additional collaboration with NUOD for the realization of the national roundtable dialogues. NUOD is already in charge for the county roundtable dialogues and therefore AIFO and NUOD could realize them also at national level.
- The increase of COVID-19 cases in the Country was also one of the challenges that risk to jeopardise achievement of the actions. Due to this challenge both project staff and beneficiaries were prevented not to:

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- Gather in large number.
- Move across the country.

AIFO will take all preventive measures in the case of resurgent of COVID-19 cases in the country to realise and complete this action in year 2.

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# 2.3. Logframe matrix updated

		-					
	Result chain	Indicator	Baseline	Target	Current value* (January 2022)	Source and mean of verification	Assumptions
Impact (Overall objective)	All deaf and hard of hearing persons in Liberia enjoy the right to have equal access to work and employment.	No. of PWDs employed in government Ministries and agencies in Liberia.	24 PWDs (6 F, 18 M) employed in government Ministries and agencies. Source: GoL Report to UN CRPD Committee (Oct. 2019)	At least 4 persons increase of PWDs employed in government Ministries and agencies.	0% (January. 2022)	GoL ministries, agencies and departments payrolls of personnel employed.  Data collected by the Liberia Institute of Statistics and Geo- Information Services (LIGIS) and assessed by NCD by the end of the action.	Not applicable
Outcome (Specific objective)	Disabled People's Organisations (DPOs) enhanced their capacity and autonomy to engage for the socioeconomic empowerment of the deaf and hard of hearing persons (HOH) in Liberia.	No. of DPOs autonomously and effectively engaged with key public and private stakeholders for economic empowerment of the deaf and HOH persons in Liberia.  No. of DPOs proposals for PWDs employment related reforms, included in key public stakeholders' agenda  No. of deaf and HOH persons which improved their advocacy competencies to become acknowledged	0 at project inception in 2020  0 at project inception in 2020  0 deaf and HOH persons at project inception in 2020	At least 3 proposals for PWDs employment related reforms, included in key public stakeholders' agenda (2023)  At least 15 deaf and HOH persons improved their advocacy competences to become acknowledged counterparts within	9 DPOs (January. 2022)  0 current value (January 2022)  0 current value (January 2022)	-Reports of multi-stakeholders' meetings and dialogs, and employment related reforms proposed by DPOs members to key public stakeholders.  - Reports of multi-stakeholders' meetings and dialogs with employment related reforms proposed by deaf and HOH persons Final Evaluation	Stable sociopolitical conditions in the country following the midterm senatorial election and the whole length of the action.  COVID-19 cases do not increase at the level to cause a country lockdown.

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	Result chain	Indicator	Baseline	Target	Current value* (January 2022)	Source and mean of verification	Assumptions
		within the disability federation in Liberia and the broader Liberian society		federation in Liberia and the broader		end of the action. Collected by NUOD and the project team on regular basis during the whole action.	
Outputs	1.1: 9 DPOs and NUOD members (100), in particular deaf and HOH persons, trained to advocate for PWDs economic and work	No. of DPOs that improved their institutional management capacities.	0 at project inception in 2020	9 DPOs improved their institutional management capacities (2023).	9 DPOs currently trained (January 2022)	Source and means related to Output 1.1. Indicators:  -Advocacy training reports with	National and county level key public
	rights on national and county level.	No. of DPO members trained by NUOD that advocate for PWDs economic and work rights; disaggregated by geographical area (national and county level and gender; disaggregated by PWDs and	0 at project inception in 2020	At least 20 of trained DPOs members are deaf and HOH persons (2023).	0 currently not trained (January 2022)	DPOs members' lists of participants  -Reports of network/liaise meetings for better representation with DPOs members participants lists.  Collected by NUOD and	stakeholders available to dialogue with NUOD and DPOs members.
		deaf and HOH persons.  No. of trained deaf and HOH persons actively interacting with NUOD and DPOs at national and county level.	0 at project inception in 2020	At least 15 of trained deaf and HOH DPOs persons actively interacting with NUOD and DPOs at national and county level (2023).	0 current value (January 2022)	the project team on regular basis during the whole action.	

Result chain	Indicator	Baseline	Target	Current value* (January 2022)	Source and mean of verification	Assumptions
1.2: 9 DPOs and NUOD members (100), in particular deaf and HOH persons, engaged in the development of advocacy and lobby strategies to influence policymakers at local and national level.	No. of advocacy actions and lobby strategies developed by DPOs and proposed to key public and private stakeholders to influence policy-makers at local and national level.	0 at project inception in 2020	At least one specific context advocacy action and related lobby strategy developed in each County and at national level (2023).	0 current value (January 2022)	Source and means related to Output 1.2. Indicators:  -Reports of advocacy follow-up meetings, and roundtable dialogue (advocacy actions and lobby strategies).	
	% of advocacy actions and lobby strategies developed by DPOs, proposed to key public and private stakeholders to influence policy-makers at local and national level, organised and implemented with active contribution of deaf and HOH persons.	0% at project inception in 2020	At least 50% of the total actions of advocacy and lobby strategies developed by DPOs organised and implemented with active contribution of deaf and HOH persons (2023).	0% (January 2022)	Collected by NUOD and the project team on regular basis during the whole action.	
awareness of the general public, as well as national and local decision-makers regarding the right of PWDs to work and employment.	% of total phone calls to IEC radio and TV programmes receiving positive comments on PWDs right to work and employment.	0% at project inception in 2020	At least 60% of total phone calls receive positive comments regarding the right of PWDs to work and employment (2023)	0% (January 2022)	Source and means related to Output 1.3. Indicators: -Recordings of radio and TV programmes regularly airedFacebook, YouTube and other social media web pages with counter and feedback systems.	

Result chain	Indicator	Baseline	Target	Current value* (January 2022)	Source and mean of verification	Assumptions
	% of total visualisations of awareness raising contents on right to work for PWDs shared on the net with positive feedback on PWDs right to work and employment.	0% at project inception in 2020	At least 60% of total visualisations receive positive feedback regarding the right of PWDs to work and employment (2023)	20% (January 2022)	Collected and analysed by the project team on regular basis.	
1.4: 90 Deaf and HOH young persons improved employability and technical/vocational skills.	No. of deaf and HOH young persons who successfully completed livelihood and skills training.  No. of deaf and HOH young persons who improved their technical/vocat ional skills and employability.	0 at project inception in 2020  0% at project inception in 2020	90 deaf & HOH young persons (2023)  At least 90% of trained deaf and HOH young persons improved their technical/vocational skills and employability	54 (January 2022) 60% (January 2022)	Source and means related to Output 1.4. Indicators:  -Livelihood and skills training reports with final tests and follow-up.  Collected by the project team at the end of the action.	
	% of trained deaf and HOH young persons that had access to employment opportunities, social services delivery and networking.	0% at project inception in 2020	At least 75% of trained deaf and HOH young persons, had access to employment opportunities, social services delivery and networking (2023)	72% (January 2022)		

# 2.4. Activity Matrix

### Output 1.1

- 1.1.1. Institutional capacity building training of NUOD and their member DPOs.
- 1.1.2. Training for DPOs on advocacy, the United Nation Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities (CRPD) and other legal human rights instruments.
- 1.1.3. Specific training provided by NUOD to DPOs to advocate for PWDs economic and work rights on national and county level (subgranting).
- 1.1.4. NUOD meetings to liaise with DPOs and PWDs for better representation within the existing DPO structures on county-level (sub-granting).

#### Output 1.2

- 1.2.1. Follow-up meetings managed by NUOD with DPOs to establish local advocacy actions.
- 1.2.2. Roundtable dialogues facilitated by NCD and NUOD to raise awareness with target audiences (including policy makers, local businesses and private sector) for better employment integration of deaf and HOH persons.

#### Output 1.3

1.3.1. IEC Programme: Community Radio and TV programme with the participation of deaf and HOH persons focussed on PWDs right to work and employment.

#### Output 1.4

- 1.4.1. Fellowship programme including life-skills, literacy, and social entrepreneurship training, and coaching for deaf and HOH persons.
- 1.4.2. Vocational training provided by inclusive and strategic partnerships with primary and secondary education institutes.
- 1.4.3. Sign language education lessons for the deaf who have little or no formal education, employers and parent support groups at community level.
- 1.4.4. Trade Fairs to showcase talents and skills of deaf and HOH persons and facilitate networking between employers deaf and HOH persons.

#### **Cross Cutting Activities**

- -Inception phase: establishment of a Project Management and Monitoring Committee (AIFO, Williette Safehouse, NUOD, NCD, Oscar Romero School); participative inception meeting with partners and DPOs; elaboration of a Training Plan, a Communication Plan, and a M&E Plan.
- Midterm and final evaluation, with a specific report on the Training Plan.

#### Means

#### **Human Resources**

- Project Manager (AIFO)
- Fellowship Programme Manager (WS)
- Finance Administrator & Logistician (AIFO)
- Finance/Accountant Officer (WS)
- Project Coordinator (WS)
- Regional Coordinator (AIFO)
- Community Workers (2 staff) (AIFO)
- Communication Officer (2 staff) (AIFO &WS)

### Physical Resources

- Rent of vehicles (vehicles rent according to the needs of activities)
- Furniture, computer equipment (2 IT kits)
- Purchase of motorcycle (1)
- Equipment for IEC programme (1 camera and 1 recorder)
- Rent of central and regional office (6 months)

#### Costs in Euros

- Subtotal Human Resources

99.115,00

- Subtotal Travel

6.960,00

- Subtotal Equipment and supplies
  - 17.190,00
- Subtotal Local office

51.060,00

- Subtotal Other costs, services

46.525,00

- Subtotal Other

350.283,00

- Subtotal direct eligible costs of the Action 571.133,00
- Indirect costs

39.979,00

- Total accepted costs of the Action

611.112,00

## Assumptions

Local and international experts and trainers are available and DPO

representatives are willing to participate (relevant for activity 1.1.1, 1.1.2 and 1.1.3).

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# 2.5. Updated Action Plan for year 2

Year		77.1	c				ı		T 10				T
A . 4* *4	M 4 4		f-year 3		1 -		7		Half-y		11	12	T1
Activity	Month 1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	Implementing body
Conduct gender analysis and organise project kick-off meeting			X										AIFO in coordination with WS
Preparation A.1.1.1. Capacity building NUOD & DPOs		X											AIFO with WS support and technical assistance
Execution A.1.1.1. Capacity building NUOD & DPOs			X										AIFO with WS support and technical assistance
Preparation A.1.1.2. Training for DPOs on advocacy, UN CRPD and other instruments.		X											AIFO with WS support and technical assistance
Execution A.1.1.2.  Training for DPOs on advocacy, UN CRPD and other instruments.			X										AIFO with WS support and technical assistance
Preparation A.1.1.3. NUOD specific training for DPOs to advocate for PWDs work rights (sub- granting)	X												NUOD with AIFO support and technical assistance
Execution A.1.1.3.  NUOD specific training for DPOs to advocate for PWDs work rights (subgranting)	X												NUOD with AIFO support and technical assistance
Preparation A.1.1.4.  NUOD meetings to liaise with DPOs and PWDs for representation (sub-granting).		X											NUOD with AIFO support and technical assistance
Execution A.1.1.4.  NUOD meetings to liaise with DPOs and PWDs for representation (sub-granting).			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X			NUOD with AIFO support and technical assistance
Preparation A.1.2.1.  NUOD advocacy follow-up meetings with DPOs to establish local advocacy actions.			X										NUOD with AIFO support and technical assistance
Execution A.1.2.2. Roundtable dialogue and awareness raising meetings facilitated by NUOD and NCD for better employment				X		X		X		X			NCD and NUOD with AIFO support and technical assistance
integration of deaf and HOH persons.													

				1	1		1	1				
Preparation A.1.3.1. IEC Programme: Community Radio and TV programme with the									_			AIFO will coordinate with WS support and technical assistance
participation of deaf and HOH persons on PWDs right to work and employment.	X											
Executing A.1.3.1.  IEC Programme: Community Radio and TV programme with the participation of deaf and HOH persons on PWDs right to work and employment.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	AIFO will coordinate with WSL support and technical assistance
Preparation A.1.4.1. Fellowship programme for deaf and hard of hearing persons.	X											WS with AIFO and ORS technical assistance
Execution A.1.4.1. Fellowship programme for deaf and hard of hearing persons.		X	X	X	X	X	X					WSL with AIFO and ORS technical assistance
Preparation A.1.4.2. Vocational training provided by inclusive primary and secondary education institutes.	X											AIFO in Nimba, WSL in Montserrado, ORS in Bomi
Execution A.1.4.2. Vocational training provided by inclusive primary and secondary education institutes.		X	X	X	X	X	X					AIFO in Nimba, WSL in Montserrado, ORS in Bomi
Preparation A.1.4.3. Sign language education for the deaf, employers and parent support groups at community level.	X											AIFO with ORS technical assistance
Execution A.1.4.3. Sign language education for the deaf, employers and parent support groups at community level.		X	X	X	X	X	X					AIFO with ORS technical assistance
Preparation A.1.4.4. Trade Fairs to showcase talents and skills of deaf and HOH persons and facilitate their networking with employers.	X									X		AIFO with WS and ORS technical assistance and overall support

Execution A.1.4.4.							
Trade Fairs to showcase talents and skills of deaf and HOH persons and facilitate their networking with employers.	X					X	AIFO with WS and ORS technical assistance and overall support

# 3. Beneficiaries/affiliated entities, trainees and other cooperation

## 3.1. Assessment of the relationship between the beneficiaries/affiliated entities of this grant contract

The relationship with partners the Co-Applicant and the Sub grantee under the project is positive and remarkable. Below there are specific information for each of the entity:

- Williette Safehouse is the Co-applicant to this grant and the relationship has been fruitful and positive throughout the reporting period. There have been rotational weekly and monthly coordination meetings. During these meetings, project activities updates are provided by each partner taking into consideration progress, challenges and activities planning.
- NUOD has being sub granted under the project to implement specific project activities. Over the period, the relationship with NUOD has been unique considering the long-standing partnership with AIFO and the involvement of DPOs into the programme. There are also monthly rotational coordination meetings also held with the purpose of giving feedback on the progress, challenges and action planned of the project.

These two entities are part of the Monitoring and Management Committee (MMC) of the VOICE Project. The Monitoring and Management Committee is established to ensure that all activities carried out are of good quality and delivered within the agreed timeframe and budget, in the respect of the decision making process. In order to do so the committee will closely monitor and advice on management decisions affecting project implementation, reputation, accountability and sustainability.

For the reporting period, the MMC has had four (4) meetings and it is being held on the last Wednesday of every month on a rotational basic. From the establishment of the MMC, the TOR to guide the MMC was developed and approved by partners institutions under the project. The MMC is made of five institutions namely, AIFO, WS, NUOD, ORS and NCD, each institution is being represented by one nominated staff to the MMC who attend the monthly meeting and give feedbacks to his or her institution.

At the MMC meeting, the developed project stakeholder matrix is also reviewed and updated regularly to give the project stakeholder matrix relevance to the prevailing reality.

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# 3.2 Assessment of the relationship between your organisation and State authorities in the action's countries, and how has this relationship affected the action

The relationship between AIFO and state authorises is very cordial with eight (8) monthly meetings being held at county and national levels. The meetings are being held with Ministry of Education-Davison on Special Education, Ministry of Justic-Davison on Human Rights, Independent National Commission on Human Rights (INCHR), NCD and Liberia National Lottery. The purpose of the meetings is to provide project activities updates and to have all parties involved into project activities. Over the period, this relationship has affected the action positively by working and planning together in the implementation of the project activities.

At the result of the collaboration between AIFO and State authorities at national and county levels the followings were achieved;

- 1. PWDs in Bomi County are now being given the opportunities to form part of the County Stringing Committee that makes decisions at the County level for developmental purposes.
- 2. Supported the facilitation of persons with disabilities in particular those with visual impairment for the usage of tactile ballot in the recent bi elections in Montserrado, Bomi, Nimba and Grand Gedeh Counties.
- 3. Provided technical support to NUOD in elaborating their position to the government of Liberia for the inclusion of pwds on the civil 19 fight. NUOD president who is now deceased was appointed on the covid 19 taskforce to represent pwd.

## 3.3 Relationship with any other organisations involved in implementing the action

#### Associates

- Oscar Romero School of the deaf is one of the associate partners of the project. All through the reporting period and based on the good relationship, ORS has been supportive in project activities management across the three counties. During the inception period, with the expertise in sign language, ORS participated in the recruitment of sign language teachers. There were also monthly coordination meetings with the aim of providing project updates highlighting progress, challenges and next activities planned.
- NCD is another associate partner. As already describe above, in the first year of the project NCD refused to sign the associate agreement, even if during the feasibility study NCD had signed a letter of intent. They never attended the project meetings and any other project activity. NCD main task in the project is the realization of the National Roundtable Dialogues and therefore this activity is still pending. The change in the top leadership of NCD, with the appointment of a new Executive Director, brought to a stalemate because she wanted to re-evaluate all the commitments made by her predecessor. There were series of meetings held with NCD to resolve issues raised about, in particular:
- Request of higher per diem for NCD staff
- Payment of accommodation and transportation managed directly by NCD
- Difficulties in accepting AIFO internal procedures
- Request for more activities and more budget

To mitigate this situation, AIFO adjusted some of its internal procedures specifically, agreeing to pay directly both transportation and accommodation to NCD staff while visiting any of the three project counties for overnight stay. Notwithstanding with this effort, NCD decided not to sign the associate agreement and not to attend any VOICE activities during the first year. However, on the 17<sup>th</sup> of March 2022, an additional meeting was held at NCD office, with the presence of an AIFO delegation from the HQ, and important and concrete steps have been taken towards a common agreement. We are currently waiting to sign the MoU.

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### Final beneficiaries and target group

The relationship with the final beneficiaries and the target group under the project is quite impressive as beneficiaries are involved daily into the activities. This is based on the feedback received from beneficiaries and target groups. The project activities information to beneficiaries are regularly shared with CSO, DPOs and the public through meetings and social media posts. Feedbacks are given to either improve or maintain the output of the activities for the effectiveness across the project counties. On the over all, among the one hundred fifty-four (154) direct beneficiaries reached in Year-1, there has been a smooth relationship. It has been appreciated across the three counties by beneficiaries.

Based on the smooth relationship being developed among both AIFO and beneficiaries, 9 DPOs are now collaborating with AIFO in the three project Counties. These 9 DPOs also benefited from two different residential trainings and the 9 DPOs are;

### Nimba County

- 1. Nimba Disabled Community (NDC)
- 2. Christian Association of the Blind (CAB)
- 3. Life is Good Disabled Association (LGDA)

### Montserrado County

- 1. United Blind Association of Liberia (UBAL)
- 2. Christian Association of Physically Disabled (CAPD)
- 3. Deaf Women in Action (DWA)

### **Bomi County**

- 1. Liberia National Association of the Blind (LNAB)
- 2. Christian Association of the Blind (CAB)
- 3. Group of 77 (G77)

### Other third parties involved

The Woman of Purpose Skills Training School – WPSTS is also another partner that is contracted to rollout the vocational and skill trainings to beneficiaries in Saclepea, Nimba County with 18 students benefiting from the program.

Additionally, for the effective implementation of project activities, AIFO collaborated and worked with County authorities, stakeholders, beneficiaries and other organizations to achieve the project activities across the three counties. Generally, they are,

- The Woman of Purpose Skills Training School
- Mohammed Fashion Design Shop
- Koror's Beautify Saloon
- Benjamin's Barbing shop

In Year-1 of the project, AIFO has linked stakeholders and employers specifically in the private and public sectors (Sky Television, ELUM radio Station, Catholic Relief Service, Local Business institutions, Ministry of Commerce and Industry, etc.) to deaf and hard of hearing persons as a means of having this segment of the population inclusive within the society. Particularly, within the job market and at decision making platform for the population.

# 3.4. Links and synergies you have developed with other actions.

VOICE project benefits of strong links and synergies with another AIFO project financed by the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA), entitled CAD-L Coordinated Action on Disability in Liberia. The CAD-L project covers the three counties in Liberia where VOICE project is operating: Bong, Nimba and Montserrado. In the counties of Nimba, Bong and Montserrado AIFO has established a very strong network of (15) DPOs, (4) OWWDs, (9) Self Help Groups and (10) Start-ups and intends to continue delivering the results of the CAD-L intervention in these areas, in synergy with VOICE

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project activities. AIFO has established a vast network of partnering organizations in Montserrado too, and it is essential to continue working in this area where most of its key and national stakeholders are based (including ministries, donor community, partners and INGOs). The successes of CAD-L Inception phase and reflections on lessons learned prompt AIFO's request to extend the CAD-L program into two new project areas, which are the counties of Lofa and Bomi. During CAD-L Inception phase, a preliminary feasibility study was carried out in support of AIFO's assumptions related to the impact that CAD-L would yield there. The county of Bomi is adjacent to the current areas of CAD-L operations, representing a great advantage for the rapid transmission of information and knowledge transferal; PWDs and DPOs in Bomi are also the recipients of a recently approved project by the European Union called VOICE27, and as such providing numerous opportunities to multiply the effect of AIFO's actions. There are 3 DPOs affiliated to NUOD in Bomi County and no Organization of Women with Disabilities. Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) with DPO members and Key Informant Interviews (KII) with government officials revealed that DPOs in Bomi need to strengthen their coordination capacities. AIFO and its partners have extensive experience contributing to the coordination efforts of counties DPOs and trust the CAD-L program will make a great impact in this respect. Furthermore, it was established during the feasibility study that - beside the VOICE project - there are no other programs or projects in the county working directly with and for Persons with Disabilities, beside the irregular and spontaneous distribution of food and small items by individuals and philanthropic groups visiting the county. The county of Lofa is adjacent to Bong County and as such also represents an advantage for the rapid transmission of information and knowledge transferal to new personnel and beneficiaries. Additionally, the county of Lofa boosts 6 well organized and coordinated DPOs participating to a program called "Social Empowerment through Learning" (SEL) which is headed by the NUOD Coordinator in the County. Regarding OWWDs, the feasibility team met an organization in Foya (Association of Women with Disabilities/AWOD - Liberia) which is very active and well organized. This group was established in 2015 with a well-structured leadership and office space, and is involved in promoting PWDs 27

### How far has this action been able to build upon/complement the previous one(s)

For the past decades, this Action partners have been promoting disability inclusive development in Liberia. In particular, this Action capitalises the results and lessons learnt from AIFO previous EU funded Actions, developed in partnership with NUOD and NCD: "From exclusion to equality: promoting Community Based Rehabilitation in Liberia. DCI-NSAPVD/2009/200-295" (2010-2013), "Multi Country Pilot Initiative of Community Mental Health in low and middle Countries. DCI EuropeAid/129197/C/ACT/Multi" (2011- 2014) and "Making it Work: Empowering Disabled People Organizations and their networks in Liberia. DCI-NSAPVD/2011/279570" (2012-2015). The previous actions started the buildout of DPOs and NUOD capacities to gain a place in the policy-making processes and introduced the CBR/CBID strategy in Liberia. Key was the utilisation of Self Help Groups (SHGs) of PWDs that promote grassroots actions at county level. This Action ensures an effective coordination between DPOs and established SHGs to promote networking and advocacy actions at county level. Therefore, this Action builds on the main conclusions and recommendations coming from the previous quoted actions: (i) the difficulty to ensure the participation of people with specific disabilities, such as speech and hearing impairment and mental health conditions, in project activities; (ii) less economically developed rural areas lack the resources needed to remain connected with the network; (iii) expected results were successfully achieved by some DPOs, however, information-sharing and advocacy capacities were not equal across the board or capitalised. In order to address this, the Action will: (i) focus specifically on deaf and HOH people as a springboard for all PWDs inclusion; (ii) adopt a bottom to top approach by mobilising rural and underrepresented communities; (iii) seek to address information-sharing and advocacy capacity gaps among DPOs by striking a balance between knowledge obtained and actions carried out so far. Moreover, with the lessons learnt from Williette Safehouse with the Emancipated Fellowship Programme supported by British and Irish Aid embassies, the Action will count on sound educational models improving communication skills, self-awareness, financial literacy and leadership.

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#### 3.5. Traineeship report on each traineeship which ended in the reporting period, prepared by the trainee including the result of the traineeship and assessment of the qualifications obtained by the trainee with a view to his/her future employment.

In year-1, there were three (3) different trainings conducted under the project: Institutional Capacity Building training, Advocacy training, Community Radio and TV training for Deaf and Hard of hearing persons. Below are the topics and reports for the reporting period;

- 1. Report Writing
- 2. **Project Management**
- 3. **Fundraising**
- Financial Management 4.
- 5. Advocacy
- 6. Radio, social media









Capacity Building Fundraising and Advocacy Training VOICE Radio and Report\_Report WirtFinancial Manageme Social Media Trainin Report.docx

# 4. Visibility

# Visibility of the EU contribution ensured in the action

At the beginning of the project, a communication and visibility plan along with the stakeholder's engagement plan were developed by AIFO and its partners. The Plan was shared with EU Delegation with the Inception Phase Report. During the first year, visibility activities were implemented as follow:

1. Development and designing of project posters, roller banners, stickers, billboards, t-shirts and project launch planning. Below are some of the designed visibility materials;



- 2. Website updates: we have uploaded the brief of the project on our AIFO Liberia website along with logo of European Union www.aifoliberia.or
- 3. Interacting on social media: regular project updates are posted on our Facebook page, LinkedIn and Twitter to create public opinion on issues related to disability and development. www.facebook.com/aifoliberia
- Uses of EU logo: The EU logo is being used for all communication material like banners, stickers, signboards thus ensuring that EU visibility requirements are fulfilled.

Visibility was ensured by placing proper information that the VOICE project is financed by the EU together with the EU logo and logo of VOICE and partners. This was done on printing materials and soft copies as well as AIFO websites and social media platforms. To strengthen the project visibility a special project banner was produced and displayed on many occasions (e.g., TVET and Sign Language Training in Saclepea)

To also enhance the visibility to the action, a formal project launch programme was held on October 15, 2021, at Smart Liberia, Monrovia, Liberia. In general, the project launch programme had three objectives:

Inclusion and **Civil Society** 

- To officially launch and promote visibility of the project
- To introduce interventions of the project to its key stakeholders
- To promote collaboration and commitment of key stakeholders towards achieving the project objectives

Apart from the official project launch ceremony, the event was also integrated and highlighted discussions on radio, print media, and articles on the project impact and/or interventions thus far.

At international level, the project is present on AIFO website <a href="https://www.aifo.it">https://www.aifo.it</a> with regular updates.

The European Commission may wish to publicise the results of actions. Do you have any objection to this report being published on the EuropeAid website? If so, please state your objections here.

Italian Association Amici di Raoul Follereau as an institution poses no objection for the publication of the results of the actions hereto.

Name of the contact person for the action:
Leonardo Volpetti – AIFO Liberia Country Coordinator
Signature:
Location: Liberia
Date report due: 30 <sup>th</sup> April 2022 (extension granted)
Date report sent:

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