

# **VOICE FOR CHANGE STRATEGIC PLAN**

**A TEN YEAR VISION 2019 - 2028**

## OUR VISION

**Peace and Gender Equality for All**

## OUR PURPOSE

Voice for Change is a women's human rights organisation from Jiwaka Province of Papua New Guinea, working to end all forms of violence and to improve economic, social and political opportunities for women and girls.

The organisation is building a society that promotes women's human rights and equal participation.

## OUR GOALS

### **Goal 1: Ending all forms of violence against women and girls**

Sustain and expand services, build enabling environment and foster learning for women and girls to be safe and respected.

### **Goal 2: Human rights for all**

Increase awareness, knowledge and commitment to human rights.

### **Goal 3: Equal participation**

Create space for diverse voices to influence Jiwaka's future across all sectors.

### **Goal 4: Organisation sustainability**

Ensure Voice for Change is a dynamic, effective and progressive organisation.

# OUR STRATEGIES FOR CHANGE

## Goal 1: Ending all forms of violence against women and girls

Sustain and expand services, build an enabling environment and foster learning for women and girls to be safe and respected.

- 1.1 Advocate for and contribute to the implementation of the Jiwaka Provincial Gender Based Violence (GBV) Strategy and Action Plan.
- 1.2 Continue to invest and lead on GBV prevention programs for rural communities.
- 1.3 Empower survivors of violence through services and access to social, economic and civic opportunities.
- 1.4 Increase public awareness and generate open dialogue on GBV issues, women's rights and peace building.
- 1.5 Create new spaces for voices and actions of young and emerging leaders to combat GBV and promote gender equality for all.
- 1.6 Strengthen partnerships to coordinate actions and responses to GBV issues and community conflicts.

## Goal 2: Human rights for all

Increase awareness, knowledge and commitment to human rights.

- 2.1 Lead education and awareness on human rights in Jiwaka.
- 2.2 Strengthen Jiwaka Women's Human Rights Defenders Network.
- 2.3 Advocate for structural change at the national level to advance women's human rights.
- 2.4 Maintain voice and visibility, and connect to local, national, regional, and international networks, women's movements, and women, peace and security forums.

## Goal 3: Equal participation

Create space for diverse voices to influence Jiwaka's future across all sectors.

- 3.1 Maintain diversity of approaches to attain financial security and sustainable livelihoods for all, in particular women, people living with disabilities and other vulnerable groups.
- 3.2 Advocate for improved access to high quality health and social services available to all, including women and vulnerable groups.
- 3.3 Connect rural women with infrastructure planning linked to agriculture and markets.
- 3.4 Increase women's participation and employment in government, law and justice sectors.
- 3.5 Develop and scale up women and leadership programs.
- 3.6 Strengthen youth and sport initiatives to promote gender equality and respectful relationships.

## Goal 4: Organisation sustainability

Ensure Voice for Change is a dynamic, effective and progressive organisation.

- 4.1 Improve human resource management and operational systems to keep staff healthy, connected and motivated.
- 4.2 Invest in new technology and skills to upgrade management systems and advance communications.
- 4.3 Lobby for VfC diverse representation at provincial and national decision making forums.
- 4.4 Expand approaches for learning and exchange.
- 4.5 Scale up monitoring, evaluation and learning systems and skills for greater evidence base, accountability and transparency.
- 4.6 Engage with supporters to attract long term funding and investment, support and resources.
- 4.7 Explore business opportunities that strengthen financial independence of Voice for Change.
- 4.8 Establish new governance methods for effective strategic oversight.

## OUR VALUES

### 1. COMMITMENT

We take pride in what we do and are committed to our roles in achieving voices for change.

### 2. FAIRNESS

We believe that everyone should feel included and be treated equally.

### 3. TRUST

We want others to see us as reliable and ethical in our practice.

### 4. PARTNERSHIP

We believe we can achieve more by working with and accompanying others. We connect with people across cultures and countries.

## OUR PRINCIPLES

### 1. EQUALITY

- We treat everyone the same way we would want them to treat us.
- All citizens have the equal rights, privileges, obligations and duties irrespective of race, tribe, place of origin, political opinion, colour, creed, religion or sex.

### 2. WOMEN'S RIGHTS

- Women's rights are central to all we do.
- We will take action to end oppression, discrimination and exploitation.
- Our actions will result in protection and justice, economic, political and social empowerment for all.

### 3. ACCOUNTABILITY

- We take responsibility for our actions as individuals, teams and partners.

### 4. TRANSPARENCY

- We will manage our resources with honesty and share our information and learning.



## VOICE FOR CHANGE - OUR HISTORY

**Based in Jiwaka Province of Papua New Guinea (PNG), in an extremely difficult operational environment and remote, rural and conflict conditions, Voice for Change (VfC) has been addressing the significant challenges faced by women since 1996.**

We began as a voluntary Rural Women's Development Initiative in 1996, bringing together local women of all ages to discuss issues affecting them and collectively explored ways to overcome problems and build safer communities for women and girls. In 2004, we registered as a formal organisation and some years after we began to receive donor funding to support our work. In 2010, we changed our name to Voice for Change to reflect the empowerment and mobilisation inherent in our goals. This was the year we also opened an office in Minj District of Jiwaka Province.

Jiwaka Province was established on 17 May 2012. It was one of two new Highlands provinces declared by the PNG Parliament in 2009. The Highlands region is different to the rest of PNG in history and culture. It was the last region of our country to have contact with the outside world, around 1950. It is the most densely populated part of PNG with 40% of the country's population. Jiwaka Province has a population of around 345,000 people. The political and administrative leaders of Jiwaka are in the process of building basic government infrastructure, establishing

public service staff strength and laying the foundation for future social, cultural and economic development.

The Jiwaka Provincial Government does not have a revenue source and is facing many challenges, including meeting the high expectations of the citizens to improve infrastructure, provide access to health services and increase economic opportunities for all.

Since we began, Voice for Change has been the leader in addressing the many forms of inequality and violence against women in our society. We have actively engaged in conflict resolution and peace mediation and settlement at the community level in response to the on-going tribal, clan or family conflicts. For example, during 2009-2014, with support of our local and international partners we have relocated over a thousand of conflict survivors. We also established the first Jiwaka Women's Human Rights Defenders Network in 2014. Our 2014 collection of data on violence generated substantial evidence and knowledge, and fostered ideas for new services, partnerships and actions. We are proud of the unique, local image-based method of rapid surveying on community attitudes and behaviours towards Gender Based Violence (GBV).



Jiwaka Women's Human Rights Defenders protesting police brutality, March 2015. Photo by VfC.

We collected data and published a report, and based on findings we developed the image-based gender trainings and toolkits on human rights and elimination of violence against women. New ideas for services and referral pathways, collaboration and partnerships were triggered from this research, including establishment of the VfC GBV Response Desks and a safe house, collaboration with local service providers and police, and establishment of a Family and Sexual Violence Unit.

Our trainings and awareness raising initiatives led to community driven development of policies and standards at different levels (e.g. community peace and security by-laws, sport team GBV protocol). In 2015, in consultation with key stakeholders in Jiwaka Province we developed the Jiwaka Provincial Gender Based Violence Strategy and Action Plan, and we continue to advocate for endorsement and resourcing of this strategy and plan.

Our past and current international partnerships include support from the UN Trust Fund to End Violence against Women, International Women's Development Agency, the Government of the Netherlands (WAVE Program), DKA Austria, Oxfam, ACIAR, Global Fund for Women, German Development Services in PNG, Fiji Women's Crisis Centre, and the Associate Country Women of the World. We also acknowledge the vital partnership with the Jiwaka Provincial Government.

Today, Voice for Change is a growing and highly influential organisation. Through partnership and collaboration, we are engaged in the equitable development of Jiwaka Province across many sectors, including law and justice, community development, social affairs, agriculture, finance, education, health and youth. Our aspiration remains peace and gender equality for all and our focus continues to be women's rights.



Voice for Change is conducting a community survey on gender based violence, September 2013. Photo by VfC.



## HOW WE WORK

Voice for Change operates through three offices in Jiwaka Province (Kilbang Station Kukpa, Minj and Banz). We work in local, national and international partnerships to achieve our goals. We are connected with and trained by national, regional and international organisations working to end violence against women and promote human rights. We are active members and advisers of many working groups and networks. As a new Province, Jiwaka has the opportunity to implement new social development policies, programs and services that will address the most pressing problems of local communities.

We are therefore closely involved in Jiwaka Province development planning discussions and committees to enable the elimination of discrimination against women and girls and all people who are excluded or oppressed.

In 2018, Voice for Change reaches many thousands of people and operates through four program approaches:

1. Gender Based Violence Prevention and Response,
2. Women and Leadership,
3. Women's Economic Empowerment,
4. Women, Peace and Security.

### GENDER BASED VIOLENCE PREVENTION AND RESPONSE

The occurrence of violence to resolve differences, disputes and conflicts in the family, the community and among tribes and rival groups is extreme. Customs and contemporary beliefs and attitudes lower women's status and create inequality of access to services, opportunities for participation, choice and decision making in all aspects of life. Women and girls continue to be vulnerable to multiple forms of mistreatment, abuse and humiliation. Gender inequality results in violence being committed in public places as well as in homes with impunity.

Women's health, including sexual and reproductive health and rights, is negatively impacted by inequality and violence. Voice for Change is working with the emerging coordination mechanisms and in partnerships across sectors, to address gender based violence and related issues in Jiwaka Province.

- Vfc works to prevent violence against women and girls by **training communities** on gender, human rights and violence prevention engaging with Women's Human Rights Defenders, working with men and communities.



Vfc conducts many trainings for communities, professionals, service providers, local women's groups and staff. Disability Inclusion training for Vfc staff and partners, September 2016. Photo by Elena Leddra/ IWDA.

- Through trainings and active engagement, we support **workforce development of service providers and police** and referral pathways and setting up district family safety committees.
- We provide **crisis response and support to women GBV survivors**, including counselling, para-legal services, information about women's rights and services available, safe crisis accommodation, and accompaniment of women to courts, police and hospitals.
- VfC pays **special attention to survivors of sorcery accusations related violence** who are suffering the most and who have to flee their homes, have their property destroyed and lose their livelihoods.
- VfC works with the different government and community institutions (courts, police, health, churches, NGOs and leaders) to **strengthen referral mechanisms for survivors** of violence against women and girls.
- VfC uses all opportunities to **strengthen awareness** on violence and its impacts on families and communities. We discuss family law; marital rape laws; the Family Protection Act and the repeal of the Sorcery Act; underage and forced marriage of young girls; bride-price; polygamy; marijuana/ alcohol and its impact; and the work and services provided by VfC and others.

- We **train local rugby league team members to become ambassadors** for the elimination of gender-based violence.
- We advocate for **policy and legal reform** in the Tribal Village Court system and with Ward Councillors.
- We join international days of action to advocate for women's rights and the elimination of violence.

## WOMEN AND LEADERSHIP

There is a vacuum of women in government, law and justice sector, and other decision-making roles. We see an urgency to give space and opportunities to women in Jiwaka to participate, alongside men, in an inclusive and empowering process of building the new Province. Voice for Change is committed to creating exposure opportunities for current and future women leaders to observe new ideas and practice.

- VfC works in partnership with the **Provincial Government and Local Level Governments (LLGs)** to help them to set new standards and norms with their respective Ward Councils, LLGs and the Provincial Government to eliminate existing customary laws, practices, attitudes and behaviours that discriminate against, harm and marginalise women and girls.



A launch of community peace and safety by-law in Dambex community, December 2016. Photo by Elena Leddra/ IWDA.



- We advocate for women’s leadership and participation in all sectors and levels of decision making.
- The **Young Women’s Empowerment and Mentoring Program (YWP)** was developed and piloted by VfC in 2017-2018. The YWP is preparing the next generation of activists to make a stand for women’s rights. It empowers young women to advocate, educate, raise awareness, influence change and lead by example to promote greater gender equality and women’s rights.
- As the convener of the **Jiwaka Women’s Forum**, we aim to unite women’s groups and women leaders to lead change in Jiwaka Province. Ending violence in homes and communities is the cornerstone of achieving the promise of PNG’s Constitution for equality and well-being of all citizens.
- We raise awareness on PNG’s limited preferential voting system and promote getting more **women into politics and government**.
- VfC are champions of the **Jiwaka Provincial Strategy and Action Plan for Preventing and Responding to Gender-Based Violence**, influencing its endorsement, resourcing and implementation.

## WOMEN’S ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT

National and Provincial government investment into community development is low and inconsistent. At the district and community level, the current state of the market is very poor. Working and trading conditions for rural women are hazardous and women have limited access to land rights.

Land size is under pressure due to population increase. This changes traditional cultivation practices, including loss of fallow land and crop rotation. Weather and climate patterns are changing crop cycles and food shortages are emerging.

The quantity of water in the rivers is observed to be dropping. Increasingly, there is less security for youth linked to land than former generations due to traditional land being sold to commercial real estate investors. Youth are engaged and excited by technology as the means to connect and learn, but Jiwaka Province is largely excluded from new technology.



VfC organised the first Jiwaka Women’s Forum in October 2017 that brought together 117 participants representing various communities across the Province. Photo by Elena Leddra/IWDA.

Potential changes to work prospects and the future job markets caused by the digital and technological shifts will be significant and challenging.

- VfC works to **improve the financial literacy and technical abilities of women and community** members engaged in the informal sector, including horticulture, livestock and fisheries.
- We help individuals and local groups to access and manage **microfinance and savings schemes, including** mobile phone banking and acting as a banking agent.
- Our **Village Based Agricultural Extension Service Program** works with rural women farmers and their families to improve skills and knowledge in agricultural production to maintain food security, increase financial literacy, enhance cash income and sustain their livelihoods.
- We operate a **Training Centre** on human rights and skills building linked to economic empowerment and employment.
- We advocate for **safe markets and new commercial enterprises** for rural women.
- We work with the Jiwaka Provincial Budget Priority and Planning Committee to ensure **gender responsive budgeting**.

## WOMEN, PEACE AND SECURITY

'Peace in the home to peace in the community' remains a major issue for Jiwakans. With a history of coerced marriage, bride price, polygamy, sorcery accusations related violence, harmful traditional practices and child brides, the security of women and girls is fragile.

Jiwaka Province has seen some decline in tribal fights in recent years but family and clan conflicts remain prevalent, mainly due to land, politics, drug and alcohol related violence issues, as well as political election periods.

Cycles of conflict are long-lasting and destructive, displacing thousands of people across the Highlands, causing loss of life, serious loss of property and assets and undermining economic development. Voice for Change has consistently supported internally displaced people with relocation support and plays important roles in conflict resolution and peace mediation or settlement.

- VfC coordinates a **peace building network** in the Jiwaka Province.
- We **train women to lead in conflict prevention, peace building and peace negotiations**.
- VfC bears witness to tribal, clan and family conflict and provides food, clothing, counselling and economic recovery **assistance to Internally Displaced People**.
- We act as **mediators and supporters** to resolve ethnic clashes.
- We are part of the global **Women's Human Rights Defenders** network and a member of the Highlands Women Human Rights Defender's movement. We established the Jiwaka Women Human Rights Defenders Network and facilitate quarterly meetings and initiatives led by the network members.



A VfC extension worker is training local women on vegetable growing, July 2014.



Lilly Be'Soer, VfC Director presenting at the 62<sup>nd</sup> Commission on Status of Women, New York, March 2018. Photo by Elena Leddra/ IWDA



## IMPLEMENTING OUR STRATEGIC PLAN

This strategy (developed in late 2018) builds upon the Voice for Change work over the last 22 years. We recognise areas in which we will need to develop and adapt to respond to the goals we have set ourselves to achieve over the next decade. The ten-year vision for Voice for Change will be a phased implementation linked to resource availability and prioritisation processes. We will promote and share our plan widely to increase and diversify partnership and collaboration.

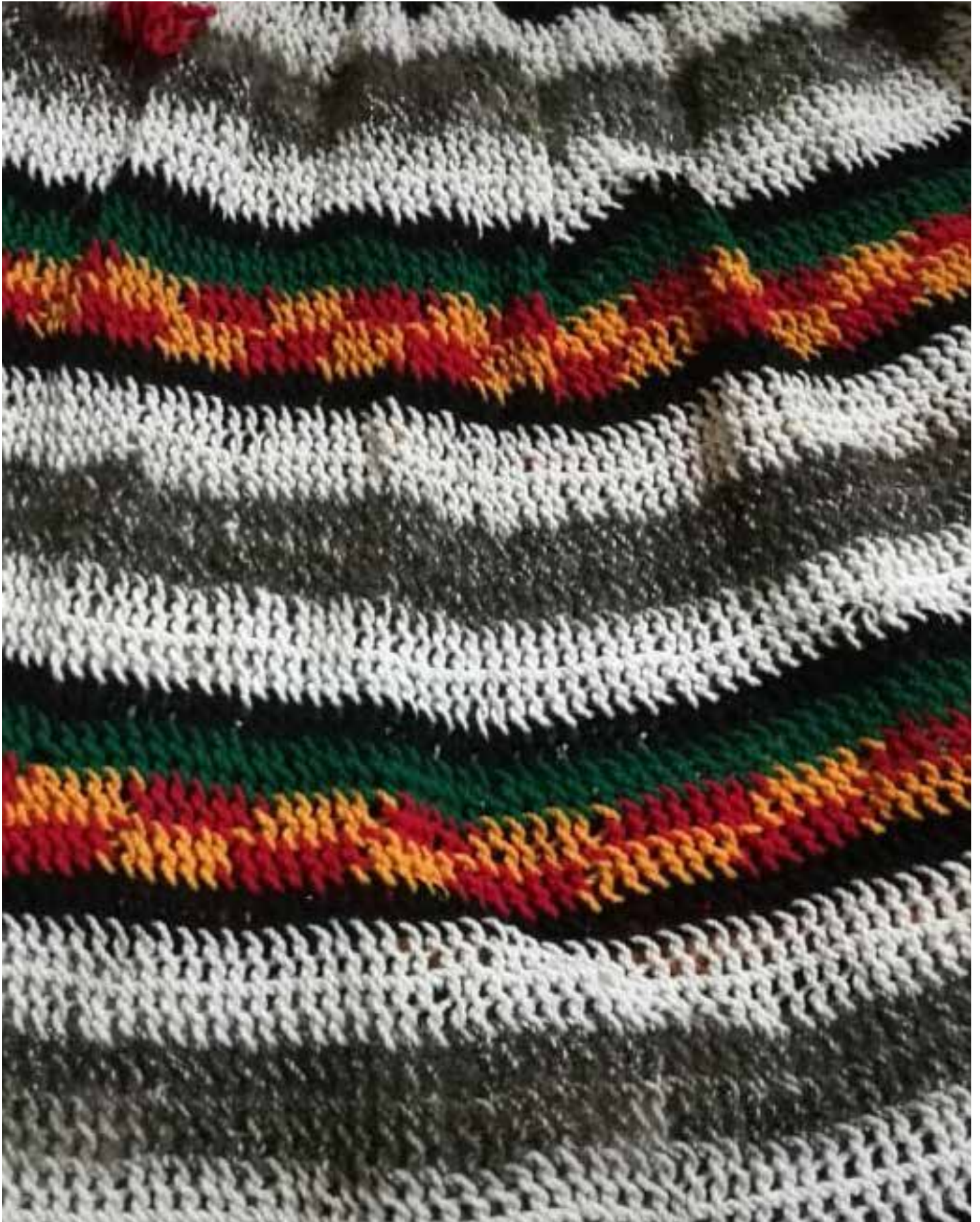
### MONITORING, REVIEW AND EVALUATION

An external mid-term review will be conducted in 2023 to assess progress and alignment with the Goals and Strategies. Objectives and Indicators linked to all Voice for Change programs, projects and budgets will provide the means to measure performance with data being generated for existing and future contract partners or supporters. This will assist teams to plan and assess their contribution to the overall achievement of the Strategic Plan. Management level internal progress reviews will be conducted annually to ensure the Strategic Plan remains a relevant and guiding document. As governance structures develop within Voice for Change, the Director will increasingly and regularly hold critical consultations with her Advisory Board.



VfC team, September 2018. Photo by Cathy Fokes/ IWDA





This strategy was developed by Voice for Change with support from Women's Action for Voice and Empowerment (WAVE) Program, IWDA and the Government of the Netherlands.



Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands