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| Danish organisation | Civil Connections Community Foundation (CCCF) |
| Title of the intervention | Maintaining Civil Society Space in Uganda through capacity building, gaps reduction and government – CSOs constructive dialogue |
| Partner name(s) | Public Policy Institute (PPI) |
| Amount applied for | 499.266 DKK |
| Country(ies) | Uganda |
| Period (# of months) | 12 months |

1. Objective and relevance (the world around us)

* **What is the main purpose with the intervention, including challenges that need to be addressed?**

On August 20, 2021, Uganda's National Bureau for Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO Bureau) suspended operations of 54 organizations for alleged non-compliance. The 54 organizations have a strong representation of youth-led agencies that are engaged in governance, accountability, participation, and service delivery monitoring. This strengthens an ongoing concern regarding efforts by the state to constrain the space for civil society actors through law enforcement. Previously (2021 – 2000), over 13 NGOs engaged similar issues/topics have had their offices broken into, bank accounts frozen and staff arrested on flimsy charges using the Anti-Money Laundering Act (2013) and the Nongovernmental Organizations Act (2016). The increasing clamp-down on NGOs has led to self-censorship thereby undermining their capacity to engage in especially advocacy.

In Uganda and probably similar contexts elsewhere, information on compliance is commonly scanty to many CSOs. This is both because it is constantly changing, and there is limited use of easy to access, CSOs friendly information channels by the authorities. This commonly comes in long gazettes and text heavy documents that defeat actors that aren’t used to heavy reading. This mainly affects periphery civil society actors with operations long distances from authority offices. Furthermore, the relation between CSOs and authorities also suffers from a culture of power imbalance – on one side the authority forms rules and punishments for non-compliance, and on the other CSOs under a culture of fear/respect for authority, fail to take up the dialogue for a conducive space. This creates animosity and incongruencies ending into a situation like we have now.

Dialogue on developments in the CSO sector, and how such CSO actors interact with such developments and changes has a fundamental role in closing such gaps and building confidence on both sides.

It is important to stress that after the suspensions were announced, several organizations entered into dialogue with the NGO Bureau – mainly on a one-to-one basis. This is understandable as it called for everyone struggling to clear their name. The NGO Forum and actors like the Public Policy Institute (PPI), have however initiated calls for the 54 CSOs to stand together as a body to advocate for the roll-back of the suspensions, but given that the decision had been made, and there were already several parallel process, as well as the timing in relation to COVID19 restricts, it was a little late to initiate this. To proof the future, PPI and several actors are already mobilizing for more sustainable ways for this dialogue, including starting the conversation with Civil Connections back in September 2021, and the emergence of this proposal.

**What we want to do:**

The purpose of this project is therefore to provide an alternative process for restoring the operational space of the affected CSOs, as well as others that could be in danger over the months and years to come. We want to start/activate a CSOs – Government authorities interaction platform where sustained structured dialogue between CSOs and regulatory bodies will be initiated and facilitated, with the ambition to bring the two estranged sides closer to each other. This will be supported by analyzing and documenting the incongruencies that exist between government regulation and CSO space for operation and developing strategies that form foundation for the dialogue process. We know that through this dialogue we will hopefully generate better understanding of what is happening, and by backing it up with a compilation of the challenges we will create space for concretely talking about these. In both the short and longer term, this should build space for lobby and advocacy for a more CSO friendly regulatory context because understanding both the state demands, and the challenges to these, will facilitate a reflection on among other aspects of promulgation, facilitation and upholding such laws on both sides. The NGO Bureau also wishes their administrative job to be made easier.

We also know that several CSOs struggle with the capacity to both understand the requirements, as well as meet them (comply). So, the results of the dialogue will facilitate a systematized compilation of not only better understood framework of requirements, but content for developing of a long-term capacity strengthening and mentoring of particularly youth led CSOs to comply with the existing policy and legal frameworks, as well as being dynamic to react to the future changes. Setting up the platform and bringing the different CSOs into the loop of following this will rebuild a watchdog effect that is almost disappearing.

* Describe the context of the intervention:

The Ugandan government repealed the Non-Governmental Organizations Act Cap. 113 and replaced it with the Non-Governmental Organizations Act of 2016 and NGO Regulations of 2017. The new NGO Act provides for a National Bureau for NGOs whose authority has been strengthened to regulate and ‘supervise’ the work of NGOs including registration and deregistration as well as approval, revoking, and renewal of operational permits among others. In addition, it also monitors the financial operations of organizations and holds NGO leaders personally liable for organization activities. This replaced a context where, while the NGO Bureau plaid most of the roles above, expulsion of NGOs was a matter of the courts of law to decide, preserving the rights of NGOs to be heard before extreme measures were taken.

The stringent measures set out in the law are a means to crack down on the work of civil society actors through legal but constraining structures. In the last two years, there has continued to emerge constraints and shrinking space for CSOs through legislation and enforcement. This has gradually led to a spate of fear and self-censorship within CSO fraternity as the pattern (of the break-ins and closure) silences those that are vocal. Financial warfare has also been leveled against ‘errant’ NGOs where accounts are closed to curtail the operations of the NGOs. The attacks on NGOs, have been extended to their staff further painting a worrisome picture. Therefore, to ward off the patronizing hand amidst the current political and legal framework, many organizations are self-censoring and exercising undue restraint towards events or conversations considered ‘too political’ or antigovernment. Civil society is slowly losing its watchdog role.

Beyond the enforcement of the NGO Act (2016), it is a fact that several NGOs are struggling to cope with legal compliance. In August 2021, Uganda Youth Network conducted a Member Organizations Capacity Assessment, which revealed that the majority of the member organizations were registered as community-based organizations and as companies limited by guarantee but not with NGO Bureau contrary to the NGO Act (2016). Further interactions with members also revealed that several (about 90%) did not understand the NGO enabling legislation and compliance requirements. This is critical, especially when the state is stepping up clampdown on CSOs that do not comply with the law. Non-compliance with the NGO Act is attributed to the historical developments of civil society in Uganda. The shift from dictatorial regimes created a favorable environment for CSOs’ progress. The current regime was also compliant with the Uganda constitution and was social development centered. CSOs thus became reluctant as the State was equally not vigilant in ensuring legal compliance by CSOs. In the wake of an upper arm of government to control, limit, and restrain some actions of CSOs, every fault is being identified to clamp down CSOs’ work.

Although now more open, the COVID19 context and measures also further constrained the work of NGOs for over 2 years, a time where the crackdowns also happened eliminating the chance for CSOs to engage with authorities in a timely manner. This has futuristic consequences too. Many have restructured several of their processes to online. But even with digital boom we have seen, there was and there remains a limited proliferation of digital tools within the CSO space to allow for effective digitalization thereby undermining the use of technology to mobilize, engage, and undertake advocacy. And this affects the peripheries most. As such, in order to continue to engage in development work as well as advocate for a healthy civil society environment, including mobilization and empowerment of citizens, civil society actors must devise new approaches and proactively aim to support youth-led CSOs who are experiencing the triple effects like the (i) shrinking Civic space, (ii) the impact of Covid 19 on their program implementation models and (iii) the shrinking financial space for CSOs due to decline in the financing, change in donor priorities, etc.

The proposed GOVERNMENT – CSO policy platform offers an alternative approach to engagement through mobilizing citizens to specific legal and policy processes using the lens of political-economic analysis. This allows a non-confrontational and structured process for CITIZEN-STATE engagement both on the operating space of CSOs as well as development issues critical to the country.

* Describe how this intervention will strengthen civil society organising – including active citizenship, volunteering, and public engagement – that contribute to social justice.

The entire plan of this project is to mobilize stakeholders and target groups to strengthen the place of civil society in Uganda for social justice, through mobilizing for public engagement and active citizenship in form of structured dialogue and mobilizing more CSOs to know their rights and act on these. Specifically,

* Calling on the need for better knowledge of the law, roles, rights, and duties around CSOs and regulating bodies forms the foundation for active citizenship and doing this in relation to especially ‘marginalized’ CSOs, also means bringing these in the loop of them being knowledgeable and active in this space.
* Working towards platforms for CSOs to come together and plan for a stronger voice and actions to engage the government, while creating platforms for CSOs and government to meet in a context where animosity is reduced, directly contributes to active citizenship, and maintaining of the rights of CSOs.
* Finally, mobilizing members of these networks of CSOs to engage in this drive also means that we are bringing this active citizenship, volunteering, and public engagement to the grassroots.
* What climate- and environmental conditions do the partnership and/or the intervention need to respond to? And how have the partners responded to it?

It is generally known that our planet, and specifically places closest to the equator where the intervention takes place, and where many of the CCCF partners are located are the most vulnerable to environmental catastrophise due to climate change. At CCCF this is now imprinted in our planning and relation with these partners that the talk about climate and climate smart ways of working are part of any project no matter what it deals with. This said, we have developed a draft internal sustainability module to guide as on everyday actions to support a healthy environment right from an individual staff level to the entire organization. This will be introduced to our partners in this project as a way of nudging them to start thinking about their internal actions and how these affect the bigger picture. To give a highlight, these include – resources use and saving, type of resources used in relation to environmental friendliness, amounts of resources, garbage sorting, energy use & saving, etc.

Specifically, we will from the onset think through a strategy that supports that all activities – during and in relation with the project are sustainable and are conscious of the responsibility towards the environment, marginalised groups in society and the climate. The project will also encourage partners and target groups to work towards the “doing no harm” principle. As part of monitoring the project, CCCF will be travelling two times to Uganda as a maximum, which we believe will keep our environmental impact at a low vs the need for effective monitoring. Ongoing monitoring and consulting are managed digitally. Socially, the project will be subject to present guidelines on social gatherings in Uganda.

The partnership/collaborators (our starting point)

* Describe the experiences, capacities, and resources of participant partners

Our project entails two levels of partnerships. We have the project legal partners – Civil Connections Community Foundation and Public Policy Institute (PPI). And several associate partners that do not have any contractual obligation or budget roles but are relevant in understanding how this project will reach its objectives. These are all presented below starting we the legal partners.

**Project legal partners:**

**Civil Connections Community Foundation – CCCF (Civil Connections):**

CCCF aims to increase value and achievement in international development initiatives with local grassroots communities, by building bridges for commonly unreached local grassroots actors (especially rural), through outfitting these with exposure, capacity, motivation, and mentorship for long-term sustainability.

**Our mission** is to facilitate grassroots development actors to achieve their aims for a fair and sustainable world. This is reached through four areas:

1. Identifying and make known/visible local community initiatives from the different locations we work in, that would otherwise find it difficult to gain such visibility for a great job they are doing.
2. Facilitating the strengthening of capacities of the identified local actors to be able to sustain as well as multiply their good achievements in their local communities as well as to the global level.
3. Supporting identified local grassroots development partners and activists in resource mobilisation and joint fundraising as a way of closing resource needs that commonly hinder longer-term survival.
4. And, implementing a knowledge development hub - including working tools, methodologies, and other resources, aimed at building further knowledge & awareness on grassroots contexts & development.

CCCF have already implemented three CISU funded projects, two in Uganda, Georgia and soon starting in Zimbabwe in February 2022 (see further in the vores CISU system). These are accompanied by other projects funded by the ERASMUS+ of the EU, NORDPLUS of the Nordic Council, and Oplysningspulje of CISU. More on “Vores CISU” or [here](https://civilconnections.org/).

**Public Policy Institute (PPI), Uganda** is an independent not-for-profit public policy and organizational development think and do (thinktank), organization based in Kampala, Uganda. Our goal is to improve the global public policy landscape facilitated by improved government-civil relations that uphold people-centered public policies for democratic governance. The mission of PPI is to develop thought leadership that enriches the social and economic wellbeing of citizens through rational and independent public policy research and engagements. PPI’s ideology is underpinned by a locally contextualized ‘Doing Development Differently’ (3D) agenda which applies a locally led political economy analysis for quality evidence.

PPI is grounded locally in the public policy landscape in Uganda with a diverse team of resident and non-resident experienced policy associates across various fields. In 2018, PPI undertook a political economy analysis of civil society influence on political and public policy reform ([see here](http://www.ppi.or.ug/blog/reports/civil-society-influence-on-political-and-public-policy-reform-in-uganda/)), which has laid foundation for current interventions including the proposed government-civil society policy platform in this proposal.

The strength that PPI brings to this partnership is a long history of guiding/mediating relations between different sectors, notably the state and non-state actors. In this role, PPI has over the years developed guiding white papers and good practices on amicable policy, as well as conducting capacity development for the different sectors. For a cross section of our publications [see here](http://www.ppi.or.ug/publications/). Learn more about PPI [here](http://www.ppi.or.ug/)

**Associate (non-contractual) partners:**

**Civil Society Strengthening Network (CSSN):** provides customized training, mentorship, and education programs for early start CSOs with limited capacity, systems, networks, and financing, but with a deep passion for sustainable development of their communities. CSSN is an NGO that was established with an aspiration of Strengthening Civil society, local government, and private sector relations as key stakeholders in sustainable community development at the local government level. The network is composed of a Programmes Coordinator who oversees the overall leadership and management at the head office in Bukoto. The programs manager is supported by two programs assistants who coordinate CSSN’s training programs at the Civil Society Strengthening Academy. Some of the CSSN team were among the youths that were consulted by the Ministry of Gender in Uganda during the review of the National Youth Policy.

**Uganda National NGO Forum (UNNGOF):** is an independent and inclusive national platform for NGOs in Uganda launched in 1997 to create space for NGOs to reflect strategize and act on matters of mutual interest. It has 650 members CSOs across Uganda, its primary constituency and owners being NGOs and other interest groups within a broadly defined civil society. UNNGOF seeks to mobilize citizens to engage with development processes as part of their civic role in society. They focus on influencing the national and international operating environment, issues of CSOs, and ensuring positive environments for their operations and engagement in governance processes. They also mobilize their members to coordinate collective policy engagements their interest. The NGO Forum will be among the key partners under objective two especially during the quarterly CSO think tank (activity 2.1 and 2.2) considering their position in the country. More [here](https://ngoforum.or.ug/)

**National Bureau for NGOs** is a government regulatory agency under the Ministry of Internal Affairs whose goal is to set out a framework that strengthens and oversees the relationship between the NGO sector and Government, and enhance capacities and effectiveness of service delivery, advocacy, and community empowerment. It is a semi-autonomous body established by the NGO Act 2016. The Act mandates it to register, regulate, coordinate, inspect, monitor, and oversee all NGO operations in the country. The project goes out to form a mediation and joint development process between youth led CSOs and their regulators, which makes the Bureau a first-hand associate partner to this project. The bureau has full knowledge of the activities of the partners and equally wishes to be part of structured dialogue proposed. Read more [here](https://ngobureau.go.ug/)

* Describe any previous acquaintance or cooperation between the partners, and how these experiences have fed into the development of the proposed intervention.

CCCF, PPI and the associate partners will be cooperating on an organisational level for the first time. However, different programming leaders in these organizations have been working in groups on different issues over the past many years. Andrew Julius Bende, the Daily Leader of CCCF, and the person responsible for this partnership, has a good knowledge of Uganda, both socially and professionally, and has among others worked with PPI and CSSN under consortiums formed by Uganda Youth Network (UYONET) around youth policy participation. Specifically, Andrew has worked with Emmanuel the director of PPI of several policy proposals for the consortium, as well as engaging on the development of components of CSSN academy education.

On another level, CCCF, PPI and CSSN have had collaborations with the NGO forum where the two latter are members, while CSSN have been close acquaintances to the forum’s ambitions to strengthen civil society space. The above connectedness has thus fed into the formation of this project and the partnership setup, with the knowledge that PPI has a strong foot in policy aspects around CSO space and has been active over the years building strong capacity in relation to policy dialogue and public – private partnership, which this proposal calls for. Their lead on many of the policy works within the 5 networks this project will specifically work with is also undoubted, the local partner and the associates are respected for their work.

* Describe the contributions, roles, and responsibilities of the partners and other actors.

This project will be organise based on our international collaboration model as follows:

On a general level CCCF will be facilitating the overall framework for the success of the project and keeping in contact with the funder for guidance. Specifically, CCCF will be lead on the following activities:

* Oversee project contract and coordination roles. Entailing facilitating that implementation frameworks, budgets and plans for ensuring success are in place & adhered to or adjusted if needed.
* Follow-up and remotely/virtually monitor the project. This will be through online meetings, two-time monitoring visits, quarterly reports, communication.
* Part of the training program by giving motivation talks online.
* Part of the mentoring program involving in online motivation sessions, discussion, etc.

**PPI** is the lead implementing partner in Uganda, in charge of managing, coordinating project activities and project stakeholders across the project’s locations. This includes the responsibility of day-to-day project management, organizing and mobilizing CSOs, facilitating project activities, and coordinating with relevant local partners. It further includes engaging the relevant stakeholders and mobilizing their network in Kampala metropolitan. PPI will be responsible for developing narrative and financial reports, which will be shared with CCCF, every quarter. From PPI, a team will be set to manage the project, including PPI’s Associate Director (who will function as the project lead), Project Assistant, and Accounts Assistant. These persons will run and support the project and coordinate activities to fit into the overall programs of PPI.

**Others:**

* **CSSN** will be connected to the project through PPI for their experience and reach at the grassroots where the typically challenged CSOs find themselves. CSSN will be key under objective 2 where they will contribute with their Civil Society Strengthening academy model - mentorships, & peer-to-peer learning.
* The **NGO Forum** will provide guidance on the Civil Society regulations, and mandates all through the project. They will be joint conveners of dialogues and activities especially activities 2.1 and 2.2.
* The **NGO Bureau** as a first-hand associate to this project will be party to all dialogues between CSOs & government, giving guidance on clear guidelines, while involving in dialogue on how this supports or empids the activities of both parties. They will moreover be first-hand informants and approvers of the CSOs regulation booklet content, as well as policy change advocates upwards in the system.
* Describe how the intervention will contribute to developing partner relationships and collaboration.

This project is the first formal collaboration between CCCF, PPI and other related partners, however, embarking on this journey sets off a commitment to joint growth and learning beyond the informal links mentioned earlier. The journey of CSO space is not anything to solve in a short time – the partnership here will continue pursuing and adjusting as new issues are found, and it will probably end into several other CISU proposals. Also, key specific skills and tools – including a network are being built, there will also grow and exist a relation and collaboration. And, in terms of the relationship to the target groups, this project will increase CCCF and PPI’s reach to both the youth networks and the various new stakeholders we will work with.

Target groups, objectives, and expected results (our intervention)

* Describe the composition of the target groups:

Our project will in total directly train and engage 573 people in the primary target group segment and engage at least 7500 people in the secondary target group, that have direct proximity to the project objectives.

In the primary target group, we are among others working with the 5 CSO networks representatives, 25 representatives from each of the 5 participating CSOs from coming that represent the 5 networks (5 CSOs x 5 networks), 6 representatives from the district NGO Bureaus across the 3 districts we will work in, 2 representatives from the National NGO Bureau, 2 representatives from the NGO Forum, 3 staff from PPI, 3 staff from CSSN, 2 staff from CCCF, 125 staff from the 125 CSOs we will engage across the 5 youth network, and 375 extra staff across the 25 CSOs representing the 5 networks.

The secondary target group will involve the following:

* At least 1575 other CSO staff members across the 5 CSO networks will benefit from strengthened mother CSOs. This is calculated by adding the (25 CSO reps + the 125-multiplier staff + 375 staff) x a 3-influence factor. I.e., they will talk to or discuss the project content with 3 other colleagues or members.
* At least 6000 members across the 5 CSO networks will benefit from strengthened mother CSOs at the grassroots, and their continuation to facilitate a strengthened CSO and community development. This is because we believe that each of the 125 CSOs in 2.4 have at least 50 members under them each.

On a general level, we envision a reach of at least 10,000 members and followers of these CSO networks we will work with that will be met with either knowledge or experience debates related to the dialogue that our project will start. Finally, the general CSO community in Uganda will benefit from a less animosity-filled CSO – government regulation space that the deteriorating context has caused over the years.

The characteristics and engagement of the stakeholder groups are described in detail under each output.

**Explaining the terminologies used – CSO networks, representative CSOs, and CSO representatives:**

Our project has three layers of operation as follows.

**CSO networks:** The first layer comprises of networks of CSOs that we will work with. CSO networks means that several CSOs have come together under one umbrella, either due to common themes, same location, or other benefits. The CSOs in these networks are still independent, but they from time to time implement several aspects as a network. Such networks have over the past years become common due to the advantages they give to their members. Our project will work with five networks as follows:

1. Kampala Youth Advocacy Development Network-KYADNET,
2. Network for youth organizations working in Wakiso (NEYOWA),
3. Climate Smart Youth Action Network (CSYAN),
4. Youth 4 City network (Y4C network)
5. Uganda Youth Network (UYONET).

Each of these networks has at least 30 smaller youth led CSOs under them for the smallest (Y4C network), while a network like UYONET has up to 180 member CSOs countrywide. As mentioned earlier, each of these networks will be represented by their key network coordinator (5 altogether) in this project, who together, the five will for a CSO networks coordination group together with PPI and CCCF.

**Representative CSOs** are these CSOs that will be selected from their networks to directly be part of the components of this project. Since our project is limited by funding, this devises a smarter way of increasing the reach of our activities and or content to the most critical of these (those effected by the recent government regulation), as well as to all the network member CSOs above. The five (5) chosen from each CSO network above, making 25 are among the 54 CSOs that were suspended, and thus thought of as in need for the dialogue this project brings in objective 1, as well as the capacitating that comes in objective 2. Moreover, the 5 network representatives and the 25 representative CSOs will be taxed to jointly implement capacitating and information activities to other network members in outputs 2.2, 2.3, 2.4 & 2.5.

**CSO representatives** are individual people that will represent the CSOs above in the activities of the project. These will be critical coordinating or leadership members, that will be tasked with the further implementation of activities in their CSOs, and in domesticating the project internally in the CSO.

* Describe how the target groups will participate in- and benefit from the intervention.

This question is best answered by presenting the project objectives and outputs, and consequently who is taking part in the different outputs and or activities. These are now presented below.

**Objective I: To develop and routinize a platform/structure for accessible and constructive Government – Civil Society dialogue, that through hosting various activities of structured dialogue will bring the two estranged parties closer together, contribute to reducing animosity between the two bodies, pave way for amicable conflict resolution, and preservation of CSO operation space.**

This will be delivered through two main avenues. Analyzing and documenting the incongruencies that exist between government regulation and CSO operational space and calling key actors on both sides to dialogue on these and amicably find ways to close the gaps. This translates into two specific outputs as follows:

* 1. **Analyzing and systematically documenting the incongruencies that exist between government regulation and CSO space for operation, as well as delving into the capacities as well as compliance aspects of CSOs to be able to design ways to close such capacity gaps.**

PPI technical team will carry out a comprehensive analysis of the existing legal and policy framework for CSO operation in Uganda. This process will begin with:

1. Reviewing the existing policy frameworks to further understand, profile and disseminate the existing legal and policy frameworks that regulate the CSO sector as a whole with an eye on the active and silent policy provisions that directly or indirectly shrink the CSO civic space in Uganda. Two specific approaches will be utilized in this process:
   1. We will carry out desk reviews of the policies and regulations that govern CSOs in the country.
   2. Hold interviews with the 5 CSO networks representatives for a qualitative input into this review.
   3. Hold focused group discussions with the 50 representatives from the 25 representative CSOs for a deepened qualitative review and analysis of how CSOs perceive and react to CSO regulations.

These findings will form part of the content for the self-compliance assessment and control tools that will be developed and utilized in point (ii) below.

1. The next step will be to carry out, as well as teach CSOs to carry out a self-compliance capacity assessment by visiting selected CSO networks to administer the tools developed above. Appreciating the policy provisions will aid the analysis of the compliance capacities of NGOs and devise approaches to mitigate faults, as well as building further on the changing trends and needs for CSO resilience. As a result, the knowledge generated and documented herein will inform:
2. An easy to self-administer and multipliable context aware CSO compliance assessment tool for CSOs to avoid being on the wrong side of the law.
3. An easily accessible and simplified CSO legal and policy tool kit, that will dynamically be updatable.
4. Developing of the background content to be included during the strategic policy discussions in the Government- CSO dialogue forums in 1.2. below. And,
5. Form content input for the capacity development trainings in objective 2 below, including supporting the updating of the Civil Society Strengthening Academy interventions.

All these products will be available online and will be kept updated by PPI, CCCF and partners.

* 1. **Implement four (4) quarterly CSO-Government dialogue meetings/forums to bring the two sides together to find ways of deliberating on expectations as well as finding amicable strategies to create trust and give CSOs ample space for operation and fight back shrinking space.**

The purpose of the forum is to establish dialogues and discussions on the existing legal and policy frameworks that regulate the CSO sector as a whole with an intention of CSOs expressing to the government how the existing framework is challenging their effectiveness to serve citizens and shrinking their resilience. These forums will take place in Kampala as the host district and hosted either at the NGO Forum or at PPI that have a respected working with the NGO Bureau, to strategically increase the chances of getting regulatory authorities to attend each of the sessions. These forums will be attended by a minimum of 40 people, including 5 CSO network representatives from the 5 networks we are working with. 25 CSO representatives, where 1 is coming from each of the 25 representative CSOs. 6 (2 x 3) district NGO bureau/CSO regulatory representatives from each of the target districts i.e., Kampala, Mukono, Wakiso. 2 representatives from the national headquarters of the NGO Bureau, and 2 representatives from the NGO forum. As a result, PPI will package the discussions including recommendations during the dialogue into articles website and other platforms.

**Objective II: To strengthen the capacity of especially youth led CSOs to comply with the key provisions of the NGO Policy (2012), the NGO Act (2016) and other CSOs regulatory provisions, as well as being dynamic to react to any future changes and unpredictable trends of shrinking civic space for CSOs resilience. This will be through various trainings, spaces for peer-to-peer learning, practices exchange, mobilizing a wider network to stand together as a unit, as well as long-term mentoring and motivation.**

Under objective two, we want to use the information generated from objective one to support youth-led networks, their member CSOs, and their staff and volunteers, with skills to exist within the current legal and policy framework of the CSO environment. Aware that advocacy is a process to get results, we want the organizations to continue existing to see their efforts come to reality. Hence, building their capacity to comply, mitigate and keep resilient throughout the unpredictable shrinking civic space. Here we shall, therefore:

* 1. Improve the existing civil society strengthening tools to make them more practical and beneficial to the target audience. Reference will be made to NGO Forum, Change the Game Academy, Global Focus, CISU, CIVICUS, WACSI, and other alternative approaches of learning besides the planned trainings.
  2. Enroll 55 staff (30 female and 25 Male), made up of the 5 network CSOs and 25 representative CSOs from these networks (2 per CSO), to undergo the Civil Society Strengthening academy (CSSA) with a series of mentorship and follow-ups both online and on-site.
  3. Set a program and requirement that the 55 CSO representatives above return to their CSOs and implement at least a 1-day updatory workshop/training on what they have learned across the project.
  4. Developing supportive materials and networks of support.
  5. Provide flexible Civil Society Strengthening fund to the selected network CSO’s.

**The main outputs under objective two will include:**

* 1. **Deliver an updated Civil Society Strengthening Academy tool kit with inputs from 1.1. above.**

The existing Civil Society Academy tool kit focuses on internal institutional strengthening hence developing strategic plans, M & E systems, and other financial systems these are all relevant, however, aware of the current shrinking civic space, the tool kit will be amplified to include external factors that can affect the resilience of the youth led CSOs in Uganda. i.e. (i) Legal and policy framework for CSOs in Uganda, (ii) Shrinking civic space module, (iii) Policy and advocacy in a time of clamp downs/constructive dialogue, (iv) Covid 19 pandemic effect on CSO programming, etc. This will take 5 working days but spread in the first quarter of the project and will involve the following target groups; 15 people including 3 staff from PPI, 3 staff from CSSN, 2 staff from CCCF virtually, 2 representatives from NGO Forum, & 5 representatives of the 5 CSO networks.

* 1. **A 14-day Civil Society Strengthening training for Facilitate 55 CSO representatives implemented.**

The 55 (30 female, 25 Male) participants composed of 5 CSOs networks representatives above, plus 2 representatives from 5 CSOs from each of the 5 networks i.e., 5 CSO networks x 5 CSOs x 2 representatives, will undergo a 14-day Civil Society Strengthening Academy and mentorship program. The academy will take place in Kampala at CSSN’s training center and will be facilitated in two intervals each lasting 7 days. The academy will be facilitated by CSSN’s pool of facilitators with experience in creative facilitation, institutional strengthening, and technical expertise in Uganda’s legal policy framework.

* 1. **Four (4) quarterly peer-to-peer CSO mentorship and self-learning sessions delivered for 55 CSO representatives. These will be around residence, navigating shrinking space, and lobby & advocacy.**

The 4 quarterly peer-to-peer learning and mentorships for 55 CSO representatives will take place at the Green Civic Spaces as social spaces for intercultural interaction and self-reflection among the CSOs with guidance from CSSN. This will also include an ongoing reflect on the outcomes of the civil society space review process in 1.1 and setting a non-formal dialogue on how to work around the shrinking civic space. Along the way experiences, inspirations and further recommendations will documented, and best practices agreed upon, that will in turn be taken back to their organizations and domesticated. These best practices will also feed into 2.4 and 2.5 below, as well as the online repository of supportive knowledge we will develop on Civil Connections and PPI websites. These will also foster the development of a strong network among the organizations and representatives participating. The 55 target participants will comprise of 5 CSO networks x 5 CSOs x 2 representatives, will undergo a 14-day Civil Society Strengthening Academy and mentorship program.

* 1. **Five (5) in network trainings by the 5 CSO networks representatives delivered – one in each network (in-network), for at least 25 other CSO representative across the project period.**

So, the 5 representatives from each of the networks will have to mobilize 25 CSOs from their network and train at least 1 staff from each of these. This will mean running 5 trainings across the 5 networks for 25 staff representatives in each network i.e., 5 trainings x 25 staff = 125 attendees, who are multiplier ambassadors in 125 CSOs and that will be critical together with the 5 CSO networks representatives to deliver output 2.5. This will be a requirement for them to bring the project outputs they have achieved in 2.2 and 2.3 to their CSOs. This also entails introducing to their organizations to the project online guides & information repositories.

* 1. **Twenty-five (25) 1-day updatory in-CSO training delivered by the 25 CSO representatives in their CSOs, as a requirement to extend trainings in 2.2 and 2.3 above to other staff in their organizations.**

Here, each of the 25 staff/CSO representatives engaged in outputs 1.2, 2.2, 2.3 and 2.4 will conduct a workshop (introductory trainings and information and discussion sessions) in their mother CSOs i.e., we will have 25 in-CSO workshops taking place with the expectation of at least 15 staff and volunteers attending each. Through this output we aim to bring the project knowledge and engagement to at least 375 other staff/volunteers in these CSOs, that will in turn hopefully act as multiplier agents in these networks. This will also entail introducing to their organizations and colleagues the online guides and information repositories.

Detailed indicators and time frame:

While the above outputs, expected results are well detailed, we will utilize our project inception to draw detailed work planning. We will here develop an elaborate set of indicators – input, process, outputs and expected impact indicators. This important to do then due to the multi-stakeholdership of the process.

* Describe the objectives and expected results.
* What is the strategy of the intervention? Describe the planned activities and how these will lead to the desired outputs and achievement of the objectives.

Allow us to answer the above two questions concurrently, as we find them intertwined in regard to the ambition of our project, namely – comprising of a strategy that entails delivering outputs that should lead to strengthened CSOs capacity to survive as well as advocate for their rights in a context of shrinking civil space.

So, as the objectives and main outputs reveal, these on a strategic level boil down to one major ambition, namely – “reversing a growing negative context where youth led CSOs are forced to be self-vigilant and censoring, and thereby shrinking their watchdog role”.

The epitome of this as mentioned earlier was the suspensions in August 2021, where over 50% of these CSOs are youth run. As a contribution to this reversal, our project proposes a mix of logical interventions including:

* Gathering evidence and context analysis on the space of CSOs to qualify the incongruencies.
* Build bridges between government & CSOs so such incongruencies are diplomatically revisited and settled.
* Facilitating joint knowledge building between state bodies and CSOs, so that these come closer to understanding each other’s roles and how they complement or support each other.
* Closing capacity gaps where found, towards policy compliance and trust building between CSOs & the state.
* Strengthening CSOs networks and collaboration as a way of building solidarity to stand together.

The above is found to be key in creating a healthy civil society operating space, and bring the country’s youth led, especially the suspended ones back into the loop of continuing their development, as well as proofing that such shocks find credible established platforms for conflict handling and solution building such as the Government – CSO platform. There is also a strategic intention with the collaborating with the NGO Bureau and the NGO Board. The NGO Bureau coming into contact with the CSOs above as a body united finds advantages in being open in helping the CSOs to be compliant, but the interaction with the CSOs also has the potential of making such a relation more human than bureaucratic. Relations built here will remain supportive of positive collaboration for the future. Moreover, the NGO Forum has already joined arms with PPI to form mentoring partners to many of the CSOs involved, and this project only supports that sustainability of such.

PPI will domesticate the project – both as part of their programming to run CSO – Government dialogues, a role they already with recognition play, as well as sustaining the rest of the results into accessible media and updating these through their research and publication facility. This will ensure a longer-term effect of the project. Additionally, PPI is joined by the 5 CSO networks that all find themselves constrained, and therefore motivated to build capacities, stand together their long-term survival and autonomy. These will be supportive in domesticating the project further to their operations, and hope that such gains will stay for a longer term.

* What are the plans for systematising experiences along the way and at the end of the intervention?

To aid this, we will setup a framework for systematizing experiences as follows:

* We have ensured that PPI and CCCF have a fully engaged project coordinator that will follow the project from start to end. This is vital for continuity, setting stable systems, and building strong acquaintances.
* Both CCCF & PPI will meet up at the start of the project to jointly revisit the proposal and harmonize work plans and other aspects that are crucial to the realization of the project, including elaborated indicators.
* PPI will compile different reports on implementation that will be utilized by the partnership to follow the project. These will include short activity, which will then be compiled into a quarterly report that will be shared to CCCF and followed up by a Zoom meeting to engage on the results of the quarter & learning.
* The partnership will also implement joint physical monitoring visits, giving space to joint learn within the context and gather up on the specific exchanges of best practices and ideas.
* Knowledge developed will feed into an online repository, both for the partnership, target groups & public.

Intervention-related information work in Denmark

* The purpose of the information work.
* Give Danish public access to what is happening in Uganda and engaging them in our work.
* Utilize this information for lobby and advocacy towards policy support for development work.
* The target groups of the information work.
* Our members and followers through online channels and our Annual General Assembly
* To other Danish CSOs present/interested in Uganda and the Danish public through public workshops
* The means of communication to be used (social media, printed matter, theatre, events, or the like).
* Public workshops & events, social media, World Wide Web (our website), and Printed content.

1. Supplementary financing - NA