Review of the Fingo Powerbank Experimentation Program 2020-2022

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Table of Contents

Annexes:

ANNEX 1: List of interviews and focus group discussions

ANNEX 2: 2020-2022 FPE Q&As

ANNEX 3: Concept Templates

ANNEX 4: Reporting Template

Introduction

Supporting the diffusion of technologies and technology transfer in developing countries has been among the key priority areas of international donors, non-governmental and civil society organizations (NGOs and CSOs) since the 1960s. Over the decades, the paradigms guiding donor policies and development financing have shifted from technology-focused to market-oriented approaches. This change has been characterized by a focus on private sector involvement and entrepreneurship in relation to technology development and diffusion, as well as through considering end users' social, economic, and cultural attributes in adopting and sustaining technological solutions. Technology has continued to play a prominent role in development cooperation. However, the recognition that technology transfer alone is insufficient for the long-term use and maintenance of technologies without supporting institutions and economic structures became prominent within the market-oriented approaches. The focus on end users and the broader intersectional socio-economic contexts, policies, and institutions in technology use and in the creation of innovations is now often reflected in development cooperation projects.

To avoid the pitfalls of a "one size fits all" approach to technology diffusion and adoption, concepts such as innovation co-creation and human-centered design thinking have recently received

The experiment by International Solidarity Foundation and Centre for Community Mobilization and Empowerment, Manga Heart, Bosinya Women Community Based Organization, and Nyamira North Women Sacco, demonstrated an increase in use of localized toll-free line by communities to report cases due to increased trust and confidence. Image by ISF.

more attention in development cooperation. As a notion, innovation carries inherently positive meanings, implying a transformative potential to resolve many complex societal problems. Despite their beneficial reputation, innovations, innovating or experimenting have not been typically embedded in the organizational processes of development projects. The mainstream paradigm in international development generally has emphasized the necessity to minimize risks, avoid failures, and follow established rules and guidelines. Promoting achievements and successes has been the distinctive approach to securing funding for future projects. Avoiding experimentation and hiding potential failures is part of the organizational culture in many NGOs and CSOs. Focus on innovation and experimentation when designing and implementing development projects would require a paradigm shift within international development. Such a shift calls for more flexible and open funding mechanisms which do not require NGOs and CSOs to forecast potential successes or failures of their innovating practices and experimentations. Moreover, proper facilitation is required to recognize the roles of NGOs and CSOs in contributing to the growth of innovation ecosystems at local and global levels.

In the context of Africa, particularly in East Africa, the concept and practice of innovation have developed rapidly in the past decades. Development strategies and policies tied to innovation ecosystems are not a recent phenomenon in the continent. Kenya's Silicon Savannah is a prime example of an innovation ecosystem in Sub-Saharan Africa. Following the exponential increase of innovation ecosystems, Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda, for example,

have experienced remarkable technological and entrepreneurial growth in recent years. Despite the considerable success, each of the above countries still faces severe common challenges regarding the innovation ecosystems' maturity, growth, and development. Fundamental building blocks for effective innovation ecosystems, such as enabling innovation-friendly policy frameworks and engagement with public, private, education, and research stakeholders, already exist in many African countries. However, the need for strategically coordinating these building blocks is still prevalent.

The Fingo Powerbank Experimentation program (FPE) aims to reinforce the concept of co-creation and human-centered design (HCD) by providing a web of support for CSOs and their local partners to help strengthen the culture of innovation and collaboration with various actors, ultimately supporting their contribution to sustainable development goals. Co-creation puts more emphasis on the active involvement of end-users. As a result, end users become engaged in creating meaning in the process and therefore commit to the innovations at a more personal level. In a human-centred design approach, processes, products and services are developed to solve problems involving a human perspective at all process stages. A human-centered, participatory design process typically includes formulating a joint vision, mapping technical expertise required, and validating design research and data analysis phases.

This review document focuses on FPE program, which supported 22 different NGOs between 2020-2022 in testing innovations and technological

Mifuko Trust ry and its implementing partner Mifuko Women Development experimented on developing a community-led ecological dry toilet model that is not only affordable but also appealing for adoption and sustainable in rural Makueni County in Kenya. Image by Mifuko Women Development.

solutions within their development cooperation activities. In 2020 and 2021, FPE focused on technology-led approach, while in 2022, the program focused on community-led co-creation and human-centered design processes (HCD). The report focuses on documenting the experimentation model, depicting the key lessons learned, and developing recommendations for different stakeholders involved in the program.

1 Description of the Project

Background of Fingo Powerbank Experimentation programme (FPE)

Finnish Development NGOs Fingo (Fingo) is the umbrella organization of 270 Finnish civil society organizations (CSOs) engaged in development cooperation, sustainable development, and global citizenship education. Fingo launched an experimentation program for its member NGOs and their local partners in 2020 as part of Fingo Powerbank project. FPE aims to enhance the NGO community and partners' experimentation, learning and sharing culture. It is evident that new and innovative approaches, tools, methods, technologies and partnerships are crucial for development organizations, but their applicability in addressing beneficiary needs requires practical experimentation. And, despite the success or failure of these experimentations, the primary added value resides in the respective new understandings, learnings and insights produced and shared.

Overview of the Fingo Powerbank Project

The primary objectives of the Fingo Powerbank project has been to 1) increase the capacity of CSOs and their local partners to utilize innovation and technological solutions to improve the impact of their work, and 2) strengthen the collaboration between CSOs, the private sector, and other actors. The project has been financed by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland. The project is expected to facilitate new and improved innovations (especially technological solutions) and future funding opportunities for CSOs to support their work towards sustainable development. As its direct beneficiaries, FPE works with CSOs in project countries and in Finland, local start-ups, private companies, innovation hubs and other hubs in project countries; Finnish and international companies, and the partner network (East African innovation hubs, Team Finland, Finnpartnerships, Business Finland, Aalto University). As indirect beneficiaries, FPE serves rights holders (e.g., local communities, vulnerable groups, families, children, people with disabilities, etc) in project countries, Finland and other program countries.

To support CSOs in utilizing innovation and technological solutions, Fingo Powerbank has built a portfolio of technical solutions, a "Technology Solutions Library" in cooperation with CSOs and partner network organizations. The portfolio is globally available via Fingo's web pages to lower the threshold for CSOs to choose and start using technologies that will make their work easier and more effective (see online: https://fingo.fi/en/technology-solutions/). In cooperation with network organizations, FPE has provided trainings, advisory services and sparring to CSOs on making sense of and using the portfolio of technological solutions. The main objective of the portfolio was to create a platform where CSOs identify their gaps and need for technical solutions to supplement their ongoing projects and to develop an experimentation proposal to be financed by Fingo or another funding organization. Ultimately, the portfolio and related activities serve CSOs in obtaining funding for experimenting the application of the desired technological solution as part of their ongoing projects.

As part of innovation and technology work, FPE has organized three experimentation rounds for Fingo's member NGOs between 2020-2022. The experiments have aimed to test technology solutions to boost the work of development NGOs (in 2020 and 2021) and to catalyze community-led, co-creation experiments (in 2022).

The list of experimentations conducted during 2020-2022 , their respective themes, budgets, and involved partners are illustrated in Table 1 below.

Table 1. List of FPEs

Year	Organization	Country	Experimentation Topic/Theme (2020 & 2021 experiments)/ Design Challenge (2022 experiments)	Budget from Fingo (Euros)	Host Programme/ Project	Partners	Technology used/ Solution
2020	African care	Somalia	Topic/Theme: Digitization of health clinic records and SMS notification to patients.	7 000	Local health facility	Community in Afgoye, VMDSO (local NGO), United Nations Technology Innovation Labs (UNTIL) and Meisour Global Solutions (developer)	Open-source Electronic medical record (EMR) system (Bahmni)
2020	FELM	Tanzania	Topic/Theme: Use of tablets to deliver education content in secondary schools	8 500	Theology students alumni field extension work	Nyakato Bible College	Tablets
2020	Fida International Kenya	Kenya	Topic/Theme: Teacher ICT capacity building on digitized curriculum delivery post COVID-19	7 000	Education Programme	ICT4D Kenya & Full Gospel Churches of Kenya	Google Meet platform
2020	Finn Church Aid (FCA)	Kenya	Topic/Theme: Radio school program in refugee camp in Kenya as entry points to provide learning in use of technology in refugee ecosystem (Kakuma and Kalobeye refugee)	7 000	Teachers and teaching support programme	Film Aid	Radio
2020	Finnish Foundation for Media and Development (Vikes)	Tanzania	Topic/Theme: Remote learning via community radios	8 500	Empowering rural communities in Tanzania through media	Tanzania Development Information Organization (TADIO)	Radio
2020	Liike Ry	Tanzania	Topic/Theme: Digital data gathering using Ombea clickers - baseline survey	5 000	Empowered Girls Speak Out Project	Sport Development Aid	Ombea
2020	International Solidarity Foundation	Kenya	Topic/Theme: Bulk SMS and social media illustrations for FGM interventions and COVID-19 messaging	7 000	Female Genital Mutilation and sexual & gender-based violence prevention and mitigation projects	Manga Heart and Centre for Community Mobilization and Empowerment (CECOME)	SMS and Facebook
2021	World Vision Finland	Kenya	Topic/Theme: Solar media backpacks to enhance learning in remote areas	8 000	Primary schools education programme	World Vision Kenya	Solar Media Packs
2021	Orthodox Church Aid and Missions FILANTROPIA	Uganda	Topic/Theme: Community systems strengthening through use of voice and message service platform to enhance women's property rights and justice	9 000	Fight against property injustices against women in Eastern Uganda project	United Religions Initiative (URI) Great Lakes	Mobile phones

2021	Finn Church Aid	Uganda	Topic/Theme: Youth creative industry skills entrepreneurship development through digitization and commercialization to offer sustainable livelihoods	6 000	Creative Industries program focusing on building opportunities in the urban context.	Caring Hands and Kalophonix (media company)	Digital learning platform
2021	International Solidarity Foundation	Kenya	Topic/Theme: Testing adoption and use of digital tools by women farmers for weather forecasting, pricing information, marketing and selling.	7 000	Livelihood Projects	Community Based Organisations (Nyamira North Women Sacco & Bosinya Women Community-Based Organization)	Digital Agricultural Tools
2021	Felm	Tanzania	Topic/Theme: Partnerships development to develop AI tool to support victims of domestic violence	8 000	Gender based and domestic violence, gender equality and women's empowerment project	We Encourage Oy Ltd and Hyvinpitely Oy.	AI chat bot
2021	Finnish Foundation for Media and Development (Vikes)	Tanzania	Topic/Theme: Digitized survey for rural community radio listeners to enhance programs effectiveness	6 500	Empowering rural communities in Tanzania through media project.	Jamii FM, Liike Ry & Sports Development Aid	Ombea & Google Forms
2021	All Our Children	Tanzania	Topic/Theme: Youth sexual, reproductive health Platform and additional information targeting university students	9 000	Youth family planning, sexual and reproductive health, and rights project	Jamii Integrated Development Initiative, Mwalimu Nyerere University & the University of Dodoma	tienoo.fi and tienoo. co.tz (digital online platform)
2021	Deaconess Foundation		Topic/Theme: Youth Employability Platform	10 000	Youth skills development and employment project	Somaliland Youth Peer Education Network	Online youth employability application
2021	United Nation's Association	Tanzania	Topic/Theme: Awareness creation, with a focus on youth, on SDG using social media content and online based course	9 100	Development cooperation project Accelerate SDG Implementation in East Africa	United Nation's Association of Tanzania & Funzi	Online platform for SDG learning
2021	Family Federation of Finland (Väestöliitto ry)	Kenya	Topic/Theme: Using AI driven SmartBot to provide sexual and reproductive health and rights information	8 000	Sexuality education programme	Neuvo Inc. Global & International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF) African Regional Office in Nairobi	AI SRHR SmartBot
2021	Physicians for Social Responsibility	Kenya	Topic/Theme: Digital data collection by PLWD	8 600	Promoting SRHR of PWD project	Africa Network Development on Sustainable Economic Activities (ANDSEA-Kenya)	Web based sms data collection by and from the People with Disability

Year	Organization	Country	Topic/Design challenge	Amount	Project	Partner	Output
2021	Inter-Cultur	Kenya	Topic/Theme: Young girls scheduling for early screening for cervical cancer	7 000	Maternal Health Care for Africa (mHealth4Afrika) and Basic Laboratory Information System (BLIS)	iLabAfrica - Strathmore University & Kibabii University	Web and mobile phone-based application to enrolment and schedule girls cervical cancer screening
2021	Finland-Somalia Association	Somalia	Topic/Theme: Digital data collection for health and environmental projects	9 000	Environmental protection and rehabilitation & mobile health clinic projects	Sahal Healthcare and Development Association in Somalia	Kobotoolbox to enhance projects reporting practices
2021	Fida International Kenya	Kenya	Topic/Theme: Delivering digitized training content to farmers through mobile phones	8 000	Food security project	ICT4D Kenya & Full Gospel Churches of Kenya	Farmers digital training manuals
2021	Fida International Kenya	Kenya	Topic/Theme: Open universities concept situational research focusing on agribusiness	10 000	PBL-BioAfrica	Hame University of Applied Sciences (HAMK), Egerton University, South Eastern Kenya University and University of Nairobi	Open university learning in agriculture (research experiment)
2022	Orthodox Church Aid and Missions FILANTROPIA	Ethiopia	Design challenge: How might we improve the health conditions for kebele community members of Dembecha district through disease prevention and treatment so that the burden of podoconiosis in this community is reduced	8, 000	IOCC Prevention of podoconiosis project	International Orthodox Christian Charities (IOCC)	Community health and sanitation tools & practices
2022	Food and Forest Development Finland	Tanzania	Design challenge: How might we facilitate the involvement of farmers in action research development and implementation, from defining research questions and collecting data to proposing solutions based on empirical information.	8 000	N/A	Tanzania Tree Growers Associations Union (TTGAU), Njombe Agricultural Development Organization (NADO), College of Forestry, wildlife and Tourism, Sokoine University of Agriculture (SUA),	Building resilience tools, action research, and climate-resilient
2022	Child Hug Uganda – Finland ry	Uganda	Design challenge: How might we decrease the number of elderly people (aged 50+ years) practicing open defecation and poor hand washing behaviors in a way that is practical and accessible for them and engages the community. The aim is to end incidences of diarrheal diseases resulting from poor sanitation practices amongst the elderly people in the Kole district.	8 000	Better health for mothers and children in Kole district project	Child Hug Uganda (CHU	Community health and sanitation tools & practices

2022	**Mifuko Trust**	Kenya	Design challenge: How might we develop an ecological dry toilet design in rural Makueni in a way that it's affordable for the community so that the community adopts and sustains the technology?	8, 000	Mifuko Trust Wash and Grow project	Mifuko Women Development CBO	Community health, sanitation tools & practices, and dry toilets
2022	**Global Dry Toilet Association of Finland**	Zambia	Design challenge: How to improve the accessibility of sanitation services and knowledge for people with disabilities and other vulnerable groups (girls, elderly etc.) in a way that they are involved in the decision making processes and their special needs are taken into consideration and mainstreamed so that these groups have similar and equal opportunities for accessing sanitation services and knowledge than the main population.	8 000	N/A	Livingstone Green Initiative, Green Living Movement, Ukadzipalile Integrated Project and Network for Environmental Concerns and Solutions implementing	Community health, sanitation tools & practices, and dry toilets
2022	**Fida International Tanzania**	Tanzania	Design challenge: How might we design and make MHM products available for women in Tanga, Zanzibar, Arusha, and Mwanza in a way that it's sustainable, affordable, and culturally appropriate so that none of the women will be inhibited by their menstrual cycle in any way	8, 000	Fida International Tanzania	Women's Choice Industries and Free Pentecostal Churches of Tanzania	Menstrual products
2022	**Malawin Lasten Ja Nuorten Avuksi**	Malawi	Design challenge: How might we create a learning environment in Nyaudzudzu Junior Primary School in Malawi where teachers, children, parents and community leaders join to support every child to achieve required standards in essential subjects by the end of their Junior School education	8, 000	MCYSA education project	Nyaudzudzu Junior Primary School	Teaching methods
2022	**Taksvärkki ry**	Malawi	Design challenge: How might we reduce cases of girls' (ages 10-18 years) school dropout in Kanongola Primary School and Mbilira Community Day Secondary School	8, 000	CYECE's girls' education and empowerment program	Centre for Youth Empowerment and Civic Education	Girls retention in school
2022	**Physicians for Social Responsibility**	Kenya	Design challenge: How might we enhance employability skills (intended action) for youthful Persons with Disabilities within Homa Bay and Siaya Counties in a way that promotes their employment chances and career progress so that people with disabilities can have increased access to better employment opportunities and increased income from their career paths in the community.	8, 000	ANDSEA Kenya program	ANDSEA-Kenya	Digital and online learning and employment & matchmaking
2022	**International Solidarity Foundation**	Kenya	Design challenge: How might we boost SGBV and FGM reporting for women and girls who have been victims of abuse in Kisii and Nyamira Counties in a timely way, while retaining anonymity, gaining speedy access to justice, and feeling safe in their communities?	8, 000	ISF's Gender Program	Centre for Community Mobilization and Empowerment, Manga Heart, Bosinya Women Community Based Organization, and Nyamira North Women Sacco	GBV & FGM Reporting

2 Purpose of monitoring and methodology

2.1 Purpose of the end of project monitoring

This report aims to review FPE's model through an assessment of the 32 experiments conducted between 2020-2022 and document the experimentation model, lessons learned, and recommendations for further sharing.

2.2 Objectives of the review

As per the Terms of Reference, the primary objective of the review is to document and analyze FPE's model. The specific objectives include:

1. To collect lessons learned and the potential added value of the experimentations to NGOs (e.g. in areas of work, skills, capacity, approaches, methods, outcomes).

2. To collect and summarize recommendations for the following actors:a Fingo for organizing a similar experimentation round. b) Fingo's member NGOs conducting experiments in their program work c) If the consultant is familiar with MFA CSO funding modalities, suggestions for improvements in the funding instrument and guidelines.

3. Document the experimentation model.

Key questions suggested and included in the review process:

4. Which elements have been most helpful in the FPE for NGOs? What could be improved?

5. What are the key lessons learned from experimentation by NGOs?

6. What outcomes have been achieved through experimentation (e.g. skills, capacity, approaches, methods, experimentation outcomes)?

7. What NGOs would recommend for peers when experimenting?

8. Which experiments have stopped, and which continued beyond the pilot? What may have been the reasons for that?

9. Concerning the community-led experimentations (year 2022): how did community-led experimentations and human-centered design thinking work for the participating NGOs? What tools, methodologies, practices, tips etc., do NGOs highlight and have possibly adopted into their work? What may prevent them from adopting lessons learned?

10. Based on the experiences from the experimentation model used, what improved model of testing new solutions/ products (both tech and non-tech) into development work would NGOs recommend?

11. What elements would NGOs recommend to be incorporated to development projects in terms of design, implementation, requirements, and approaches?

2.3 Methodology of the review

The review was conducted between 26.4.2023 and 29.6.2023. The review methodology comprised of a preparation phase (review of secondary and relevant documents), data collection (interviews and focus group discussions), compiling of findings and report preparation, and presentation and finalization of the review report.

At the beginning of the review process, the consultants received a number of relevant project documents from the Fingo Team. After reviewing the documents, an initial introductory briefing session was organized to familiarize the consultants with the different project modalities and further discuss the review methodology.

Detailed review methodology and respective timeframes were set as per the introductory briefing session. Accordingly, the consultants have proceeded to review the necessary documents, prepare the focus group discussion (FGD) and interview guides, circulate FGD and interview guides for FPE team for comments, and produce the final version of the interview and FGD guides. 2020-2022 project/experiment portfolios, 2020-2022 Power Bank outsourced experimentation applications, 2020-2022 Q&A orientation and presentations, 2020 – 2022 experimentation concepts, presentation, reports, Purpose and tasks of partnering NGOs/2022 (specifically Butterfly Works), and FPE program extension document (2020) are among the list of reviewed relevant project documentations.

With continued assistance from the FPE team (in approaching all partner NGOs and in selecting NGOs for detailed interviews and FGDs), three FGDs, and three in-depth investigations into examinations selected by Fingo were conducted. The details of the interviews and FGDs are indicated in Annex 1. The three in-depth cases selected for this review comprised the experimentations by 1) Liike ry and its implementing partner Sports Development Aid in Tanzania (Digital Data Gathering in Schools; 2020); 2) Orthodox Church Aid and Missions FILANTROPIA and its implementing partner United Religions Initiative in Uganda (Communication network against domestic violence, 2021) and International Orthodox Christian Charities in Ethiopia (Reducing Community Health Burden, 2022); and 3) Fida International Tanzania and its private sector partner WomenChoice Industries (Making Reusable Menstrual Products Accessible; 2022).

African Care digitized its health clinic's records and built an SMS notification system for clinic consultation and treatment dates for patients in Somalia. Image by African Care.

Each individual interview lasted 50 – 70 minutes, whereas the focus group discussions (FGD) ranged between 60 – 90 minutes. Both FGDs held with organizational representatives had five participants, whereas the FGD with community facilitators for FILANTROPIA's implementing partner United Religions Initiative in Uganda consisted of three participants. Altogether 29 persons were included either in individual interviews or FGDs.

All the interviews and FGDs were conducted in English, except for the FGD with the community facilitators with whom the NGO staff member acted as an interpreted in some parts of the discussion. The meetings and discussions have been documented in the form of video recordings; and qualitative, thematic data analysis was used to generate findings from interview notes.
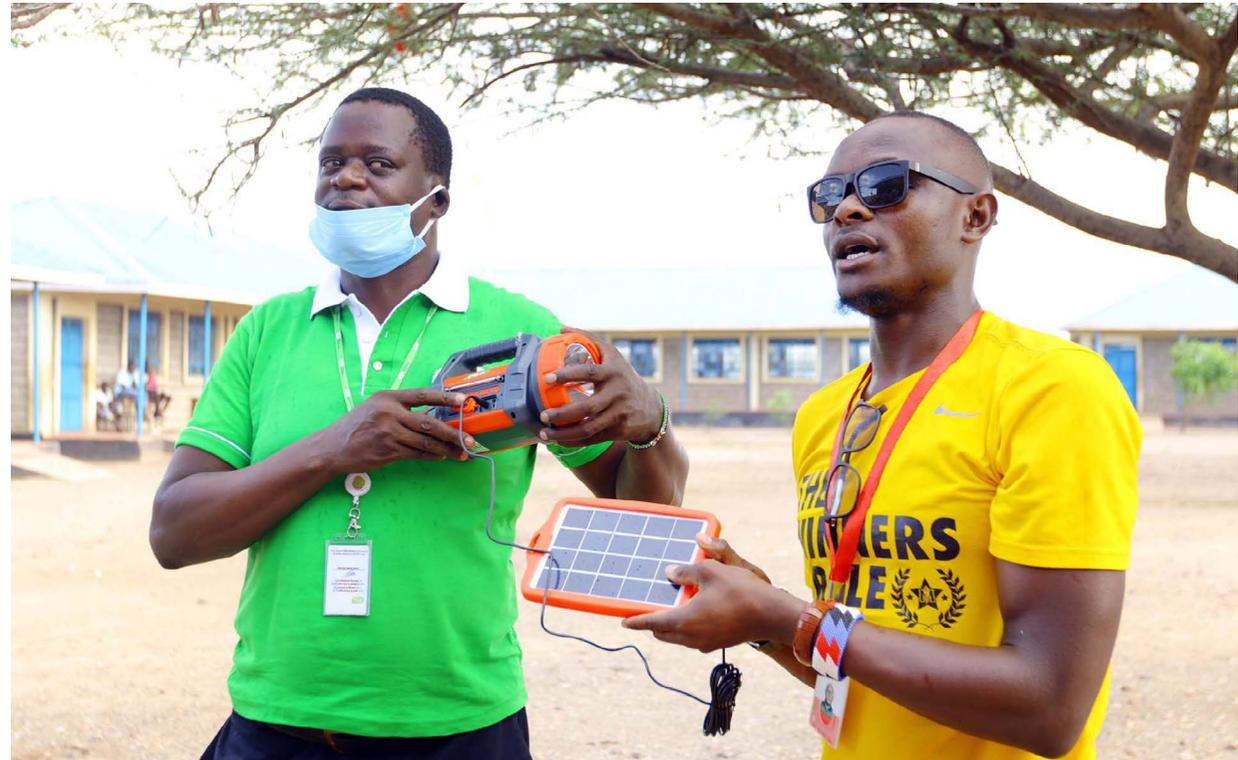
3 Findings of the review

The findings are categorized into three sections: 1) Process of implementation; 2) Experimentation outcomes and scalability; and 3) Limitations. The findings regarding the process of implementation focus on Problem identification; Ideation; and Partnerships. In the section on Experimentation outcomes and scalability, the review focused on Programmatic outcomes; Scalability; and Learning outcomes.

3.1 Process of implementation

The implementation process is documented in Figure 1 as a flow chart on the experimentation model. The figure strives to establish the key characteristics of the experimentations while simultaneously acknowledging that each experiment had unique characteristics that may not be incorporated into the model. The objective of documenting the experimentation model is to make the process visually accessible to other organizations to learn from, and to potentially implement in their programs. The yellow text in the figure refers only to Rounds 2020 and 2021, since they focus on technologies as primary solutions to the identified problems. The implementation activities concerning only community-led Round 2022 are marked in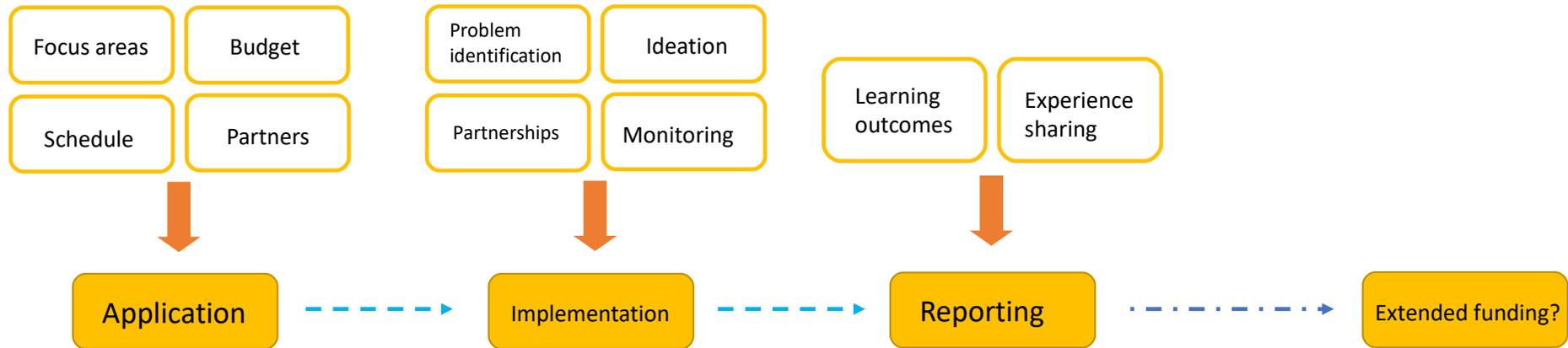 blue color in the figure, since the human-centered approach differed significantly from the implementation in previous rounds. For the Rounds 2020 and 2021, notable activities in the Implementation phase included trainings organized by Fingo on the "Technological Solution Portfolio", selection of appropriate technological solutions, and the organizational implementation of the chosen technologies.

Finn Church Aid experimented with solar radios and flash disks to support radio lessons in Kakuma and Kalobeyei refugee areas during COVID-19. Photo by FCA.

Figure 1. FPE's program's experimentation model

Experimentation offer

- Problem identification
- Proposed solution (Fingo Powerbank Technology Solutions Portfolio)
- Geographical location of the experiment
- Newness of the solution
- Expected benefits and learning outcomes
- Alignment with ongoing projects
- Gender, disability inclusion, climate change
- Principles for Digital Development

Round 2022: Community-driven innovations

- Training on human-centred design approach
- Partipatory design process
  - Identification of stakeholders
  - Articulation of design challenge
  - Formulation of vision
  - Identification of target group
  - Mapping of required technical expertise
  - Design research and data analysis
- Ideation phase and validation

Report

- Adherence to Principles for Digital Development
- Partnerships and collaborations
- Scalability and sustainability
- Gender, disability inclusion, climate change

Continuous support from Fingo

Problem identification

To demonstrate the differences in the problem identification between technology-led experimentations (rounds 2020 and 2021) and community-led- experimentations (round 2022) ; the first two rounds centered heavily on improving organizational processes through technological solutions within the programmatic focus areas. As an example, Liike ry and its implementation partner Sports Development Aid in Tanzania faced difficulties monitoring activities in rural areas due to the limited availability of electricity, the amount of paperwork and associated workload. For this identified problem, they utilized the Ombea technology in data collection and analysis for the monitoring of schools' sports activities. The data collection clickers and application drastically reduced the amount of time, electricity and labour required for data collection. Moreover, the quality of the data allowed for a better understanding of the contents of their projects.

Similarly, Physicians for Social Responsibility and its partner ANDSEA were challenged by data collection within their organization. Through FPE, they utilized a Kenyan IT company Ceilo to digitalize their data collection on disability inclusion within their projects. The experimentation improved their organization's data analysis practices through aggregate data reporting.

In round 2022 experimentations, the problems were identified at the end user level rather than at the organizational level. The bottom-up approach resulted from the human-centred design, which places problem identification to start with the end users i.e. beneficiaries and prioritizes their needs over organizational needs. As an illustrative example, Fida International Tanzania and a social enterprise WomenChoice Industries began to experiment with different reusable menstrual hygiene products that would be available and affordable to end users. The problem was identified through joint market research and the pilot products were being co-created and tested with the end users.

The alignment with programmatic focus areas was strong in all experimentations, which was to be expected. Despite the round 2022 allowing for more options in identifying the problems with end users, the boundaries were still drawn to encompass the expertise and focus areas of the facilitating NGOs. As recommended by Child Hug Uganda-Finland, a good practice is to inform the end user community on identifying potential problems prior to ideation: where they would need to focus on generating solutions so that they have a ready list of some of the problems before the idea development. In such a manner, the end users' expectations are also set clear from the beginning, contributing to a more explicit ideation phase.

Ideation

The ideation phase for potential experimentations varied between the rounds 2020, 2021 and 2022. In the first years of the experimentation program (2020 and 2021), the member organizations and their implementing partners received a lot of support from Fingo in terms of learning about potential technological solutions through the Technology Solutions Library/Portfolio and Matchmaking Platform. This support proved crucial for organizational learning about different technologies and allowed the organizations to choose between a variety of 31 different options freely. On the other hand, some organizations, such as Väestöliitto and World Vision, had already been approached by private companies to test existing technological platforms such as chatbots and solar backpacks. In such cases, the technical solutions came outside of Fingo's technology selection.

In Round 2022, the ideation phase changed drastically after revising the experimentation approach. Round 2022 was based on human-centered design thinking, where the end users actively create solutions to their problems. In some experimentations, the ideation phase started with very broad questions regarding the major problems the end users face in their locality. In the case of FILANTROPIA and International Orthodox Christian Charities, Ethiopia, the community members would list many topics such as access to road, transportation, and availability of soap. As the next step, the organization would facilitate the ideation phase by matching the problems with the available resources. The idea of producing local liquid soap using a local herbal plant and chemical products was formed during this process. The organization contributed to the idea by promising to deliver containers to the end products.

The human-centred approach required a change of mindset of different stakeholders: the NGO staff members would need to unlearn their expert positionalities and restrain from translating end users' linguistical formulations to "technical language". This in turn requires intentionally flattening power hierarchies and giving voice and

space to the often marginalized groups. For this purpose, the building of trust was important. As reported by the Global Dry Toilet Association, there is often silent discrimination towards stigmatized groups they are working with. In such a situation, it takes time to convince these groups, the end users, that the NGO staff is not there to judge them and that they can speak and ideate more freely.

"...they were quite shy to speak anything or they just, you know, wanted also to sit in the background and hear what's happening. But, by the end of the sessions, they warmed up, you know, and started to to speak more freely. And, you know, in the workshops we had both - like people with disabilities and also the other community members. First, they weren't that keen to, you know, come up or like, discuss about how communities are treating them.... because obviously even within the families, there is quite a lot of discrimination going on silently and, you know, bringing these issues up is difficult as some of the issues are quite stigmatized in a way. So getting them off and making communities to understand that they can speak freely and we are not judging them or like trying to find mistakes is an important process..."

However, the ideation could not proceed in all possible directions even in the human-centered approach. Often the boundaries were set by the programmatic focus areas and also by the

organizations' capacities to conduct the scope of proposed experimentations that evolved through the ideation. Moreover, there needed to be flexibility from the NGOs' side in their understanding of "innovative" experimentation coming from the end users: often such ideas and solutions would build on already existing solutions, such as hotlines (International Solidarity Foundation, Kenya, 2022) and cost-sharing solutions for pit-latrines (Child Hug Uganda-Finland, 2022), or be rather simple in technological terms, and would as such not carry the high-tech image with them. This required a more open mindset from NGOs to define what an "innovation" can mean.

Partnerships

The experimentations facilitated the formation of new partnerships, whether with synergistic NGOs, governmental organizations or private sector actors, as well as the strengthening of already existing partnerships. In the case of FILANTROPIA & United Religions Initiative, Uganda, their experimentation on creating evidence on gendered property disputes urged them to create connections with other local organizations offering pro-bono legal service – partnering with such organization strengthened their network and enabled them to support the beneficiaries more holistically and in a more continued manner.

The partnerships with private sector actors triggered through the FPE program, varied in scale and intensity. In most instances, during Rounds 2020 and 2021, the partnerships with private sector actors were mainly instrumental

and the role of enterprises remained as a provider of technological solutions. Such partnerships, however, were often accompanied by co-creation activities, where the NGO would give important information to the enterprises on developing and improving their solutions. A private sector partner initiated the experimentation in a few other experimentations by approaching the NGO to market their technological solutions (e.g. Väestöliitto and World Vision). In other cases, as with Fida International Tanzania, the partnership with WomenChoice Industries started with personal interests in similar topics, and slowly developed into a strategic partnership. In this case, Fida International Tanzania already had prior experience on private-sector collaboration through the Finnpartnership program, and was familiar with private-sector partnerships.

The partnerships in community-led experimentations (Round 2022) focused more on building relationships with local experts and market actors. The community-led solutions often focused on cost-savings and income-generating activities, making the partnerships smaller. The community-led ideation would result in more localized solutions since the access to knowledge about larger organizations and solutions would often be limited to the communities. Notable exceptions would include e.g. the Fida International Tanzania's partnership with WomenChoice Industries and Fida International Kenya and PBL Bio-Africa project, which demonstrate partnerships with larger, and even international organizations and networks. In such cases, the NGOs would take a more notable role in developing partnerships between the communities and private sector or other organizations through their networks.

3.2 Outcomes of experimentations

The outcomes of the experimentations varied to a large extent. The review highlights differences between scaling and sustainability of the experiments, which often resulted in continued benefits for end users and increased organizational learning outcomes.

Scalability and sustainability

In the context of FPE, scalability takes a broader interpretation than expanding technology or practice to a wider user group. Technology or approach may a) be directly scaled as it is (either by increasing the number of beneficiaries and/or dispersing the technology to other projects), b) be scaled but after making the necessary modifications, or c) be completely abandoned while using the learnings to develop project concepts in other directions further than the one tried in the respective experimentation. Therefore, in FPE, the concept of scalability is more attributed to the process of sensemaking or learning regardless of the success or failure of the respective experimentation.

The pie chart below, Figure 2, visualizes the experimentation projects' continuation and potential termination. The scaling of the experimentations took place either through an expansion to other projects within the same organization in the same country (e.g. FILANTROPIA & IOCC, Ethiopia; Deaconess Foundation & Y-PEER), or sometimes within the same organization but in another country

Global Dry Toilet Association of Finland and Livingstone Green Initiative, Green Living Movement, Ukadzipalile Integrated Project and Network for Environmental Concerns and Solutions developed accessible toilet prototypes through participatory design. Image by GDTA Finland.
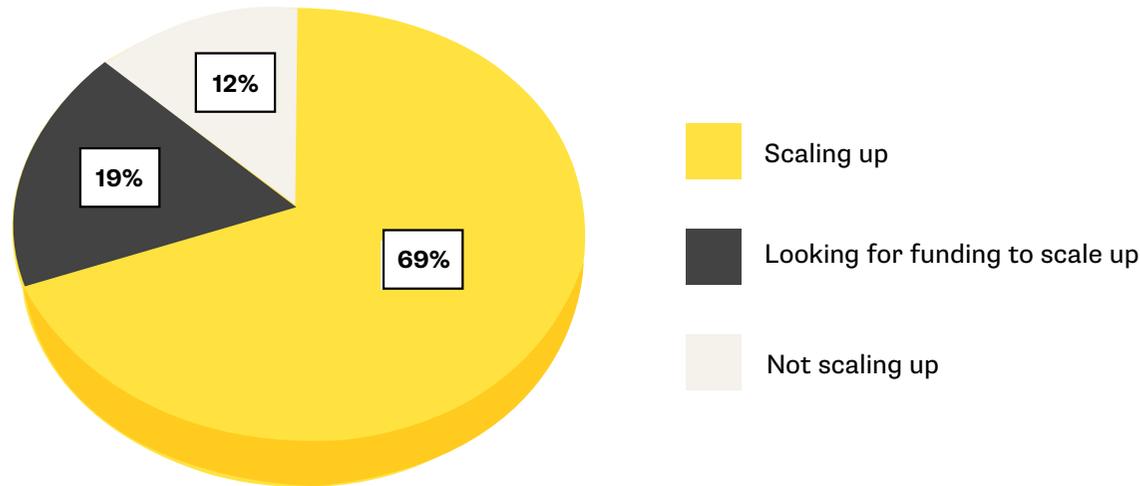
or sector in which the NGO operates. World Vision, as an example, utilized the same technology in their other program countries. The scaling was enabled through a scalable technology, which could, in some instances, also be borrowed to other NGOs (e.g. Liike ry and Sports Development Aid Tanzania borrowing the OMBEA clickers to Vikes ry and its implementing partner Jamii FM accompanied with a simple introduction to the technology). Solidarity International Kenya utilized already existing governmental structures to continue the project while phasing out themselves. In the case of Väestöliitto and Fida International Tanzania, the scaling involved active and ongoing marketing and expansion through the private sector's market-based channels. For example, Väestöliitto is currently negotiating with their partner Neuvo about potential profit-sharing mechanisms if their co-created chatbot and its contents is sold to other NGOs and organizations in the future. Fida

International Tanzania and its private sector social enterprise partner WomenChoice Industries have expanded their solution of reusable menstrual hygiene products to other geographical areas within the country and expanded their manufacturing production capacity through a successfully funded project.

In the community-led experimentations (2022), the localized human-centered design method produced more tangible, physical solutions such as inclusive dry toilet solutions, shared pit latrines or liquid soaps. The continuation and scaling are more complex to evaluate in such cases, as the long-term sustainability would often depend on the maintenance and operations of physical infrastructures and products. However, most organizations perceived the participatory community-driven innovations as valuable and often scaled to the NGOs' other projects.

Figure 2: Scalability

N.B. The responses of 16 NGOs involved in FGDs and key participant interviews are included in the below pie chart

- Scaling up
- Looking for funding to scale up
- Not scaling up

- reaching out to and motivating young girls back to school Liike ry & Sports Development Aid, Tanzania)

- establishing and maintaining contacts with community actors (such as the police) and enabling more beneficiaries to freely and independently report on their progress. (Liike ry & Sports Development Aid, Tanzania)

- reaching out to a wide scale of radio audience population. (Vikes ry)

Learning outcomes

The key learnings from the experimentations are listed below:

1. The role of adaptable technologies in reconfiguring the workflow format

The first key learning of FPE is the importance of simple-to-use and adaptable technologies in enhancing organizational capacity in terms of workflow and networking. As evidenced in several interviews, FGDs, and key participant interviews, the adopted technologies have not only been efficient in transforming labor-intensive work activities (e.g. data collection, compilation, analysis, project execution, etc.) into cost-effective and timely approaches, but also have been significant in terms of easing up the process of networking; approaching relevant actors and maintaining contact. The gains in effectiveness specifically apply to smaller NGOs, whose work processes are not yet as streamlined as the larger NGOs' such as World Vision. Moreover, these adaptable technologies have also increased the organizational capacity to increase access to target groups. Good examples include:

Increased organization capacity in

- accessing beneficiaries in remote areas (Physicians for Social Responsibility & ANDSEA)

2. The role of innovative community-led approaches in boosting outcomes (especially in the Round 2022)

The second key learning of the FPE project relates to HCD approach's innovation component adopted in the community-led experiments. The HCD approach's primary focus is learning the problem through participatory action research, where innovators/implementors must immerse themselves in the problem and the community at large. HCD acknowledges local knowledge and techniques and applies human factors/ergonomics to further develop these local knowledge and techniques. The methods adopted in HCD include immersion, observing, contextual framing or ideation, community brainstorming, modeling and prototyping, and implementation in community spaces. As evidenced in the interviews, FGDs, and key participant interviews, the HCD approach in the community led-experiments has yielded the

following outcomes:

- Empowered end users– the methods and tools adopted in the HCD approach, such as the recognizing and uplifting local knowledge, viewpoints, and techniques, as well as the co-creation of solutions or systems of governance, have been able to reconstitute the end users and stakeholders as key drivers and decision-makers in the ongoing projects.

- Enhanced reverse learning – the HCD approach has also improved the reverse learning process (NGOs learning more from the emd users and the communities involved). Before the HCD approach, NGOs' learning interaction with the community was partly limited to the need identification phases of the project. However, with the HCD approach's adoption, NGOs have engaged in a continuous learning process (as participatory researchers) throughout the project phase. This learning has been visible across the FGDs and interviews. However, excellent examples can be experimentations from Dry Toilet Association Finland, International Solidarity Foundation, Physicians Social Responsibility & ANDSEA, and Taksvärkki ry / CYECE, Malawi.

3. A new format of community relations

The third key learning, visible across the FGDs and interviews, is the new community-NGO relations that resulted from introducing new technologies and the HDC approach in FPE. In many of the technologically aided experiments, the community-NGO relations

Image by Mifuko Women Development.

are mediated by technologies that enhance the community's responsiveness/involvement by granting anonymity, freedom of expression and inclusion. In addition, due to the introduction of technologies, communities have also to revise their relations with their technological devices. For instance, in experimentations where data is collected through beneficiaries' mobile phones (E.g. United Nations Association of Tanzania; Väestöliitto), beneficiaries have to start using their mobile phones for activities other than calling and thus increase their technological capabilities and literacy. Finally, due to the introduction of new participatory modalities, what used to be an implementor–beneficiary relationship/communication between NGOs and communities has now transcended to a partnership

relationship where community leaders have a say in each phase of the project implementation activity.

4. NGOs' capacity building

The fourth key learning of the FPE project is NGOs' versatile capacity building. By conducting FPE experiments, all the NGOs, and the implementing partners in particular, have acquired learnings that enhanced their skills in designing experimentation projects and engaging diverse stakeholders in innovation co-creation practices. For several international, Finland-based NGOs (such as World Vision), the improved capacity included new networks with technology companies, skills in providing feedback on technologies (Liike ry giving feedback to Ombea) and playing a significant role in developing the technological functions further together with the company, i.e. co-creation often based on contributions by end users (e.g, Väestöliitto and Neuvo Inc. Global co-developing an AI-based chatbot;), learning from using HCD approaches in different projects, experience sharing, etc. For the implementing partner NGOs, the increased skills directly relate to staff's improved skills due to learning incurred from operating, implementing, or co-producing technology and implementing the HCD approach. This form of learning can be directly applied to other ongoing projects. For instance, Fida International Tanzania's partner WomenChoice Industries has been able to use its acquired innovative community-based approach on other funding calls and has been able to secure funding. In addition, Physicians for Social Responsibility & ANDSEA also utilized its enhanced capacity in the 2021 experiment to design and implement the 2022 experiment.

3.3 Limitations

The main limitations regarding the FPE are listed below:

1. Less interaction with beneficiaries

In many of the FPE projects (Round 2020,2021,2022) studied during the review process, the utilized technologies are basically used to reconstruct the community engagement platform (community-NGO engagement). It has been evident that the insertion of these adaptive technologies via the FPE experiments has increased cost-effectiveness, outreach to and inclusion of more beneficiaries. It has also helped the user community in terms of self-expression and empowerment through granting anonymity, which would not be possible in non-digitalized human-based communications. However, despite such positive outcomes, a digitalized community engagement platform could also mean less face-to-face interaction between NGO staff and beneficiary communities, increasing the risk of reducing a complex community problem into simple application-based quantified variables. The benefits of face-to-face interaction, e.g. during monitoring, would require further investigation to evaluate the severity of the lack of interaction with end users and beneficiaries.

2. Unanticipated extra work for various stakeholders

It has been evident from the review process that the NGOs' and implementing partners' staff have acknowledged the on-the-job capacity-building effects of the FPE experimentations. However, especially in technology-led experiments, inserting a new component in an ongoing project also increases the workload of specific personnel among the implementing partners, requiring additional remuneration for these personnel. For instance, in Liike ry's experimentation, remuneration have also been required by teachers not only due to the extra work and an elevated capacity acquired from operating OMBEA's clickers. Although most experimenting organizations were satisfied with the simplicity of the application and reporting processes, e.g. Fida International Tanzania faced challenges with new types of templates and the extra time that was required from NGOs' management to assist their field staff in compiling the reports.

Another limitation FILANTROPIA & United Religions Initiative expressed in Uganda was the unexpected spread of the technological solution beyond their programmatic area. The number of the hotline that was intended to support women in the selected district on topics related to gendered property rights issues and GBV spread into other geographical areas. Several other people started to call the number with their concerns, which sometimes crossed the program focus's boundaries. This also created more pressure to manage the operations of the hotline. Such a spread increased the organization's workload and was difficult to stop.

Vikes conducted a listener's assessment on the impact of community radio using a digital data-gathering tool. Image by Vikes.

3. Technical factors

Technical factors attributed to the domain within which the technology operates have yielded some limitations to implementing the experimentations. Among these, the most common is the outage of mobile/data networks and electricity and the inability to access beneficiaries in very remote areas due to minimal mobile/data networks. This limitation may challenge the inclusiveness of specific technological solutions at the expense of marginalizing certain user groups. In addition, factors attributed to the adopted technology also constitute some aspects of the limitations. For instance, there have been technical issues with the mobile phone-based app used by ANDSEA, which was later updated as per the ANDSEA's recommendations. In addition, some of the mobile applications transfer a limited amount of questions and other data required for monitoring purposes through text messages at a time. Therefore, the questionnaires need to be very compact so as to make them fit to the data size supported by the application for a single data transfer. This makes the gathering of all relevant information in a timely basis challenging. FILANTROPIA & United Religions Initiative, Uganda mentioned that technology still does not generally overcome some structural power hierarchies. Even with evidence of injustices created through smartphones, bringing influential, elite persons to justice is sometimes difficult.

Physicians for Social Responsibility and ANDSEA-Kenya gathered and shared data to enhance disability inclusion. Image by ANDSEA Kenya

4. Limited scope and duration of the experimentation

FPE's entire experimentation process is supposed to be conducted between 9 to 12 months, where application and contracts take 2 -3 months, implementation takes 6 months (in some instances only 4 months), and reports and presentations take around 2 months. However, the ground realities may deviate from the actual schedule. Accordingly, some major limitations attributed to scope and duration have been evident among the education and school-based experimentations (Taksvärkki ry / Center for Youth Empowerment and Civil Education, Malawi , Liike ry & Sports Development Aid,Tanzania, Fida International Kenya etc.) as well as in experimentations that required new and intensive private-sector collaboration (e.g. Fida International Tanzania, Väestöliitto). Even though the implementors do not doubt the success/ usefulness of such experimentations, the limited timing of the experiment (3 months) and the scope (the focus only on one school) minimizes the potential learning outcome. Given that the school experimentations focus on tackling the problem of young women dropouts, as an example, the respective evaluation and learning processes would be more complete if the experiment was conducted for the entire academic year and in other schools with similar target groups.

4 Conclusions

FPE has provided NGOs, implementing partners, and community stakeholders with valuable experiences regardless of the success or failure of experiments. With a focus on simple-to-use and adaptable technologies, the technology-led experiments (Rounds 2020 and 2021) have critically contributed to increased skills in terms of using technological solutions and devices (teachers, community facilitators, NGO staff members, governmental actors) as well as in terms of handling analysis tools and aggregate data. In Round 2022, with the adoption of the HCD approach, FPE extended a more in-depth understanding of end users'/beneficiary community's needs and abilities for innovating through unlearning expert positionalities (for NGOs and implementing partners) and acknowledging the local community's knowledge and expertise. In summary, FPE has supported NGOs and implementing partners in strengthening their organizational culture of experimentation, learning, and knowledge sharing and establishing and sustaining in-depth networks with beneficiary communities and key stakeholders. Even though each specific/project level FPE experience has its own context, FPE's most significant added value include:

For NGOs and their implementing partners:

- Strengthening their existing networks and establishing and sustaining new networks

- Inclusion of more target groups by adopting simple-to-use and adaptable technologies

- Supporting capacity building through on-the-job experience (enhanced technology use) and through knowledge transfer incurred from NGO-private sector partnerships

- Assisting capacity building through reverse learning (knowledge transfer) incurred from implementing HCD approach

For communities:

- Fostering a new community-NGO relations format through the introduction of new technologies to on-going projects

- Strengthening community stakeholders' capacity building through community-led experimentations and the use of HCD approach

Felm and its partners worked on AINO chatbot to support victims of domestic violence in Tanzania. Image by We Encourage.

5 Recommendations

5.1 Recommendations for FPE organizing team

- The experimentation approach should consider granting flexible implementation duration based on the nature and specificness of each experiment. Planning experimentation durations should be executed by NGOs as part of the initial funding applications.

- Increased involvement of national and regional actors would enhance the experimentations' value, acquire more focus from relevant stakeholders, and enhance the dissemination of outcomes.

- Including more local innovations/technologies into the project would enhance the experimentation results and the value of its sustainability as these local innovations also get a platform for scalability.

- In the future, the experimentations should create spaces for donors involved in other similar, ongoing activities and projects in other locations to monitor the entire process from inception to completion. This will provide firsthand information for donors on the processes of experimentations and

a medium to attract more resources to the experiments and to boost scalability and sustainability. Organizing/facilitating post-experimentation experience sharing and match-making forums, especially for implementing partners and community facilitators so that learning is shared and outcome is enhanced between similar experimentations/projects in different geographical contexts.

5.2 Recommendations for NGOs

Below are high-priority recommendations from participating NGOs to other NGOs

- **Thorough inventory of resources at hand** – One significant learning for NGOs from FPE is the swift on-job capacity-building process. This process has made NGOs aware of the untapped resources (staff potential, local/user community knowledge, local modalities/structures of relations and local abilities to innovate) in-hand that can be brought together to achieve successful outcomes only with minor capacity-building activities (for instance, capacity building

on the operation of adopted technologies). Therefore, development NGOs engaged in similar activities, especially implementing partners, should thoroughly inventory such untapped resources and look for ways to enhance these resources' capacity by adopting simple-to-use technologies to improve the respective project outcomes.

- **Reverse learning/Knowledge transfer** - NGOs should emphasize the significance of reverse learning (bottom-up knowledge transfer) that results from HCD's methods and tools. The HCD approach provides a critical and continued learning platform for NGOs and implementing partners and also enhances project outcomes, sustainability, and innovativeness

- **Post-experiment strategy** –Some relevant critical questions that NGOs should ask themselves include; what happens to experimentations that are considered successful by implementing partners who have little or no say on funding decisions that determine the continuation of these experiments? In the case of non-continuation of such successful experimentations (because of lack of funding), what would be the social/community level impact given that the user community has already been

introduced to new formats of dealing with specific problems? What are the social consequences of withdrawing practices that are considered valid by the user community? Therefore, NGOs and implementing partners planning to be involved in FPE or similar modalities should initially consider developing a comprehensive post-experiment strategy to accommodate the organizational and social aspects attributed to the outcomes of the experimentations.

ANNEX 1: List of interviews and FGDs

Individual interviews:

	Organization	Interviewee	Position	Experimentation & Year	Date
1	Fingo	Mika Välitalo	Advisor, development and innovation	N/A	02.5.2023
2	Fingo	Peter Njuguna	ICT4D Specialist	N/A	02.5.2023
3	Filantropia / United Religions Initiative, Uganda	Despina Namwembe	Regional Coordinator	Communication network against domestic violence; 2021	11.5.2023
4	Filantropia / International Orthodox Christian Charities, Ethiopia	Haragewoin Desta	Country Director	Reducing Community Health Burden; 2022	12.5.2023
5	Filantropia / International Orthodox Christian Charities, Ethiopia	Abebe Kelemawork	Regional Project Coordinator	Reducing Community Health Burden; 2022	12.5.2023
6	Butterfly Works	Merel Van der Woude	Creative Director	2022	15.5.2023
7	World Vision, Finland	Jussi Laurikainen	Programme Advisor	Solar media backpacks in training; 2021	15.5.2023
8	Liike ry	Ari Koivu	Executive director	Digital Data Gathering in Schools; 2020	15.5.2023
9	Liike ry / Sports Development Aid, Tanzania	Thea Swai	Project manager	Digital Data Gathering in Schools; 2020	15.5.2023
10	Physicians for Social Responsibility / ANDSEA, Kenya	David Okelo	CEO	Digital data collection on disability inclusion; 2021 & Enhancing Employability Skills for Youthful Persons with Disabilities; 2022	19.05.2023
11	Taksvärkki ry / Center for Youth Empowerment and Civil Education, Malawi	Edward Chickwana	CEO	Retaining Girls in School; 2022	30.05.2023
12	International Solidarity Foundation, Kenya	Mary Momanyi	GVB Coordinator; Project Manager	Enhancing Reporting of Sexual and Gender Based Violence (SGBV) and Female Genital Mutilation (FGM); 2022	18.5.2023
13	Fida International, Kenya	Elisha Gura	Country Program Manager	Digitization of farmers' training materials & Open university courses on agriculture; 2021	22.5.2023
14	Fida International, Tanzania	Juho Rouhiainen	Country Programme Manager	Making Reusable Menstrual Products Accessible; 2022	26.5.2023
15	Fida International, Tanzania / Womenchoice Industries	Lucy Odiwa	Co-Founder and CEO	Making Reusable Menstrual Products Accessible; 2022	31.5.2023
16	Väestöliitto, Finland	Laura Lipsanen	Advisor on Development Cooperation	SRHR information via Chatbot; 2021	31.5.2023

Focus group discussions

	Organization	FGD participant	Position	Experimentation & Year	Date
1	Child Hug Uganda – Finland ry	Brenda Nicholas	Program Manager	Reducing Open Defecation and Poor Handwashing Behaviour; 2022	17.5.2023
2	Child Hug Uganda – Finland ry	Harriet Anyinge	WaSH Officer	Reducing Open Defecation and Poor Handwashing Behaviour; 2022	17.5.2023
3	Mifuko Trust ry, Kenya	Peterlance Maundu	Project Manager	Improving Accessibility of Ecologically Dry Toilet; 2022	17.5.2023
4	Food and Forest Development Finland, Tanzania	Adrian Monge Monge	Climate Change Specialist	Involving Farmers in Action Research Development and Implementation; 2022	17.5.2023
5	Global Dry Toilet Association of Finland, Zambia	Sari Laurila	Project manager	Improving Participation of PLWD in WASH; 2022	17.5.2023
6	United Nations Association of Tanzania	Goodluck William	SDGs/Human Rights Program Manager	SDG awareness raising via social media; 2021	26.5.2023
7	Vikes ry / Jamii FM	Amua Rushita	Station manager	Digital data gathering on community radios' impact; 2021	26.5.2023
8	Deaconess Foundation / Y-PEER	Mohamed Dama	Executive Director	Youth Employability Platform; 2021	26.5.2023
9	Fida International, Kenya	Joseph Karanja	Project team leader	ICT training for teachers; 2020	26.5.2023
10	All Our Children / JIDI	Nina Bina	Administration and Operations Manager	Information platform for youth; 2021	26.5.2023
11	Filantropia / United Religions Initiative, Uganda	Zaria Ddamulira	Program officer	Communication network against domestic violence; 2021	29.5.2023
12	Filantropia / United Religions Initiative, Uganda	-	Community facilitator	Communication network against domestic violence; 2021	29.5.2023
13	Filantropia / United Religions Initiative, Uganda	-	Community facilitator	Communication network against domestic violence; 2021	29.5.2023

ANNEX 2:
2020-2022 Q&As

Powerbank Experimentation Q&A (2020)

Who can apply for the outsourced experimentation funding from Fingo Powerbank?

All Fingo member NGOs and CSOs

Are there tracks/focus areas for outsourced experimentation for 2021 round?

Yes, they are. The focus areas of the concepts for outsourced experimentations in 2021 cohort/round are;

- Education

- Artificial Intelligence (AI)

- Health

- Disability

- Gender

- Private sector collaboration

- AI experimentation with Omdena (set beforehand)

Can NGOs who were outsourced to experiment in 2020 reapply for the 2021 round of outsourcing experimentation?

Yes, they can

Can NGOs who were outsourced to experiment in 2020 reapply for 2021 round to scale 2020 outsourced experimentations?

While that would be good, we encourage applying to experiment new concepts even if they are in the same focus area e.g. health, education etc for new learnings other than scaling 2020 experimentations as-is

Is Powerbank giving out funds to member organizations?

No. Fingo is not allowed to give funding to member organizations. However, Fingo can outsource experimentation work based on the offers submitted by selected NGOs. Fingo can then purchase (i.e. outsource) the experimentation work, including the the lessons learned report & presentation, from the member organization. This is similar to consultancy services: call for offers, consultants respond with offers and if accepted, the work can be done (i.e. deliverables will be produced) after which consultant can invoice purchaser of services.

Is it possible to work as a consortium (e.g. several NGOs and partners together)?

Yes, it is. That is even preferable. Please

describe the share of roles, responsibilities and budget between the different stakeholders in the funding application. With multiple Fingo member organizations the total budget in the offer can become higher than €10 000 (although not per organization).

Are we supposed to develop innovations through experimentations? If yes, what does innovation mean?

Yes, do aim at having an innovation as a result (you may succeed or fail in doing so). You can watch this video to learn more what Fingo Powerbank means by innovation: https://www.fingo.fi/powerbank/video-what-innovation-means-development-ngos

What is the timeline for offers?

Note Fingo about the interest by email: 7th May
Submit the offer: 15th May
Feedback from Fingo: 18th May
Submit final offer: 25th May
Receive decision: 29th May

Start conducting the experiment: June onwards till the end of the year 2020

Does our organization need to audit the invoiced money?

No. Since Fingo is not funding any organization, but rather purchasing services, we do not need to audit the funds.

Since this experimentation is regarded as a purchased service (and not a grant), similar

to a consultancy service, there is no need for financial reporting. That is, just as a consultant would not be required to do financial reporting, similarly the NGOs implementing these outsourced experimentations would not be required to do so.

 The most important component is conducting the agreed work/tasks and deliverables, as documented in the contract (including the two annexes)

The invoices for payment can be sent according to these instructions: https://www.fingo.fi/yhteystiedot/laskutusosoitteet .

Do we need to conduct competitive bidding when purchasing e.g. devices with the Powerbank funds?

It is up to your organization to decide if and how you procure products and services. Note that any devices purchased with the invoiced money may be considered as a property of Fingo. However, Fingo does not want to take any devices back from any organization but rather leave them in their original place (e.g. indefinite borrowing).

Can we collaborate with religious organizations?

Sure, as long as your experimentation adheres to ODA criteria.

How do we need to report?

Fingo will purchase the outsourced

experimentation as well as learning report from your organization if the offer concept is accepted. The template for that report will be provided by the start of the work. Work should be concluded and invoiced by the end of the 2020.

The outsourced experiments are quite small in scale (€3000 - €10000). Where could we apply for more funding?

Yes, this Powerbank work is more like a "experimentation voucher" which you can integrate in an already existing project. In this way your organization is also co-implementing the Powerbank and increasing the understanding and use of new tools, methods and approaches with the peer NGO network.

There will be more guided and supported opportunities to seek more external funding in the future (e.g. together with companies).

Can we collaborate with UN Technology Innovation Labs?

 Yes, you certainly can. There is special interest towards remote learning solutions and UNTIL can coordinate an ecosystem of actors and experiments together with interested NGOs. For example Vikes will be bringing in their expertise in using radio in extending learning to communities esp. during COVID-19. Please be in contact with Tiina.Neuvonen@un.org in regards to education concepts.

There are also thematic leads for circular economy, peace and security as well as health

(contact marketta.gland@un.org for more info).

Should we engage with companies (corporate collaboration)?

Not a requirement, but certainly a recommended possibility if useful for the experiment. However, be conscious of the fairly limited budget and time available in this case.

My organization was working on "connectivity concepts" earlier in connection with UNTIL. Are those concepts somehow linked to this experimentation round?

You can submit your offer based on the connectivity concept; they are fully compatible with this opportunity. You can also modify the concept (e.g. due to changed situation) or submit a new one.

Will similar Powerbank funding be available in 2021? If the offer from my organization is accepted in 2020, can I submit on offer again next year?

Yes, similar round will be available in 2021 (approx. €40 000 in total again). As outsourcing experimentation is aiming to inspire NGOs to try out new solutions and approaches in their work, we'd like as many organizations as possible to get engaged. Thus, the ones working with experiments in 2020 will not be a priority next year. But as said above, we do map other external funding sources to continue with.

What if the experimentation fails?

It is OK to try, possibly fail and learn from it. As long as you have tried your best and shared the experiences, lessons learned and recommendation with other NGOs, we'll be happy.

There is supposed to be a "Technology Solutions Library" provided by Fingo Powerbank. Can some equipment be borrowed for the experimentation?

Yes, the there will be a library of different technology tools for testing and learning both in Finland and in Kenya (can be used also in other East African countries). However, since the suggested time to borrow and test any device 2-3 weeks, we cannot guarantee the availability of any particular technology for your organization during the experimentation. Please be in contact with the Powerbank team if you have particular interests or questions regarding the Library.

What is there are for example 8 organizations all submitting the offer with €10 000 budget? As there is only €40 000 in total in Fingos budget, what happens then?

Yes, the total amount of funds does limit the scale of experiments per organization. So, based on the offers each accepted NGO/consortium will eventually receive amount between €3000 - €10 000, but it may be lower originally budgeted in the offer.

Where is the call for offers?

See below next page

Powerbank Experimentation Q&A (2021)

Updated 18.1.2021

Introduction

Fingo Powerbank aims to strengthen the culture of experimentation, learning and sharing within the NGO community and partners. New approaches, tools, methods, technologies, and partnerships can be valuable for development organizations but often require practical testing to find out their potential. Regardless of thriving or failing (or something between), experimentations are be considered successful if new understanding, learnings and insights are produces and shared.

Fingo Powerbank releases a new call for experimentations focusing on the use of technologies by member organizations and their local partners. Interested organizations can submit their offer using the provided template according to the timeline explained below in detail. The budget in the offer can range from 3 000 to 10 000 euros. The total budget for experimentations is 80 000 euros. In most cases, the experimentation will be an additional component and budget line to an existing project. This helps your organization to adopt and experiment with new approaches and tools in your programs as well as give Fingo and other organization opportunity to learn.

The overall expected results from the use of these funds are sharable learnings and experiences that will also benefit other organizations and communities. Note that we need to coordinate among each other to avoid very similar parallel experiments to take place and rather keep the cases diverse for maximum learning. We will keep the implementation plan and reporting concise not to burden the already busy organizations unnecessarily.

The guidelines in a nutshell:

- Geographical focus: East Africa

- Start of the experiments: see the timeline

- Funds should be used by the end of the year 2021.

- Reporting: documentation and learning by the end of the experiment. Sharing experiences in a webinar during the implementation.

- Implementation document max. 2 pages, template will be provided (* see key questions below).

- If you need support for example in finding and adopting technology solutions in your pilot, organizing the experiment, please contact Fingo Powerbank staff.

- Utilizing already existing solutions in your concept in perfectly OK if you can bring new added value to your programs (and ultimately to the people and communities).

Powerbank staff will help you before and during the pilot but have limited bandwidth due to several parallel tasks.

Questions and answer regarding the 2nd round of outsourced experimentations

1. **Who can respond to the call for the experimentation from Fingo Powerbank?**

All Fingo member NGOs

2. **Are there particular topics for experimentation that would be of interest to Fingo Powerbank?**

The focus of the experimentation is on testing potential technologies to boost the impact, reach, scale and/or efficiency of organizations existing projects. The solutions could be for example around digital education or health services, mobile data gathering, community reporting systems, youth media production, artificial intelligence coding skills, connectivity in rural areas and so forth. Solutions can originate from the local markets and companies as well as from Finland or other areas. Please find examples in the Technology Solutions Portfolio and several reports in the Powerbank sites. Collaboration with companies or organizations developing and providing the technologies is recommended although not compulsory.

We emphasize integrating gender equality into the concept. Disability inclusion and climate change are other possible cross-cutting issues.

The thematic areas (e.g., education, health,

livelihoods, child protection etc.) are not restricted but rather depend on each organization and its currently running projects.

3. Why the experimentations focus on the use of technology? Aren't there also many other non-technology solutions available (such as new education methods, better inclusion practices etc.) that could be experimented?

Very true. In general innovation and experimentation do not require the use of technology. Social innovation is an important part of NGOs work. However, in this particular call we are focusing on technology solutions as they are a key part of Fingo Powerbank program and often under-utilized by NGOs.

Can NGOs who were conducting experiments with Powerbank in 2020 apply again in the second round? Is it possible to use the second round to scale-up earlier experiment?

Yes, all Fingo member organizations can submit an offer. However, the offers should contain new experimentations, not scale-up of an already tested model.

5. How should NGOs recognize the Principles for Digital Development in the experiment?

There is need to integrate the Principles for Digital Development in the experiment. Adhering to the principles, both in technology-enabled and non-technology led innovations, in development

work is important to guarantee a higher possibility of success. There will be a session on Principles for Digital Development training prior to organizations submitting an offer. This will be a good training in supporting organizations in writing the offer. This training is recommended, but not mandatory for submitting an offer.

6. Is Powerbank giving out funds to member organizations?

No. Fingo will not give funding to member organizations. However, Fingo will outsource experimentation work based on the offers submitted by selected NGOs. Fingo will then purchase (i.e., outsource) the experimentation work, including the lessons learned report & presentation, from the member organization. This is like consultancy services: ToR / call for offers is released and interested consultants respond with offers. If the offer is accepted, a contract will be signed, and the work can start. Eventually agreed deliverables should be produced after which consultant can invoice purchaser of services.

7. Is it possible to work as a consortium (e.g., several NGOs and partners together)?

Yes, it is. That is even preferable. Please describe the share of roles, responsibilities and budget between the different stakeholders in the funding application. With multiple Fingo member organizations the total budget in the offer can exceed €10 000 (although not per organization).

8. Are we supposed to develop innovations

through experimentations? If yes, what does innovation mean?

Yes, do aim at having an innovation as a result (you may succeed or fail in doing so). You can watch this video to learn more what Fingo Powerbank means by innovation: https://www.fingo.fi/powerbank/video-what-innovation-means-development-ngos

9. What is the timeline for the process?

- Launch and Q&A session: 13th January 2021

- Principles for Digital Development training: 27th January 2021

- Submit the draft offer: 27th January

- Feedback from Fingo: 5th February

- Submit final offer: 20th February

- Receive decision: 26th February

- Forming and signing contracts: by 12th March

- Sharing lessons learned in a webinar: September-November 2021

- Submitting the final report: December 2021

10. Does our organization need to audit the invoiced money?

No. Since Fingo is not funding any organization, but rather purchasing services, we do not need to audit the funds.

Since this experimentation is regarded as a purchased service (and not a grant), like a consultancy service, there is no need for financial reporting. That is, just as a consultant would not be required to do financial reporting, similarly the NGOs implementing these outsourced experimentations would not be required to do so.

The most important component is conducting the agreed work/tasks and deliverables, as documented in the contract (including the two annexes)

The invoices for payment can be sent according to these instructions: https://www.fingo.fi/yhteystiedot/laskutusosoitteet .

11. Do we need to conduct competitive bidding when purchasing e.g., devices with the Powerbank funds?

It is up to your organization to decide if and how you procure products and services. Note that any devices purchased with the invoiced money may be considered as a property of Fingo. However, Fingo does not want to take any devices back from any organization but rather leave them in their original place (e.g., indefinite borrowing).

12. Can we collaborate with religious organizations?

Yes, as long as your experimentation adheres to Official Development Aid (ODA) criteria.

13. How do we need to report?

Fingo will purchase the outsourced experimentation as well as a peer learning presentation and short report from your organization if the offer is accepted. The template for the presentation and the report will be provided by the start of the work. Work should be concluded and invoiced by the end of the 2021.

14. The outsourced experiments are quite small in scale (€3000 - €10000). Where could we apply for more funding?

This Powerbank outsourcing is like an "experimentation voucher" which you can integrate in an already existing project. In this way your organization is also co-implementing the Powerbank and increasing the understanding and use of new tools, methods and approaches with the peer NGO network.

For further funding and scaling-up, please contact Fingo for further information (e.g., Finnpartnership, MFA, EU, corporate collaboration etc.)

15. Should we engage with companies for/during the experimentation?

Not a requirement, but certainly a recommended possibility if useful for the experiment.

16. What if the experimentation fails?

It is OK to try, possibly fail and learn from it. As long as you have tried your best and shared the experiences, lessons learned and recommendation with other NGOs, we'll be happy.

17. What is there are for example 10 organizations all submitting the offer with €10 000 budget? As there is €80 000 in total in Fingos budget, what happens then?

The total amount of funds does limit the scale of experiments per organization. So, based on the offers each accepted NGO/consortium will eventually receive amount between €3000 - €10 000, but it may be lower originally budgeted in the offer.

18. Will there be a call for offers?

Yes, an invitation to tender document will be provided together with application form

19. Can an organization propose experimentation that is similar to one that had been experimented my another organisation in previous round of experimenation?

While this is not likely to happen, where an organisation suggests an exact the same/similar experimenation under a similar project from previous year by another organisation, this would be discouraged in order to have new learnings and diversity. If such a case emerges, it would be discussed with the proposing organisation

Powerbank Experimentations Q&A Template(2022)

Introduction

Fingo Powerbank aims to strengthen the culture of experimentation, learning, and sharing within the NGO community and partners. New approaches, tools, methods, technologies, and partnerships can be valuable for development organizations but often require practical testing to find out their potential. Regardless of thriving or failing (or something between), we consider experimentations successful if new understanding, learnings, and insights are produced and shared.

Fingo Powerbank will release a new call for experimentations focusing on participatory design and co-creation processes at the community level. In practice, the aim is to support Fingo's member organizations and their local partners to embed an experimental component into their existing projects in East Africa. Instead of defining the solution in the concept phase, the experiment should allow genuine engagement and co-creation with the selected community.

Interested organizations can submit their offer using the provided template according to the timeline explained below in detail. The budget in the offer can range from €5,000 - €10 000. We recommend that the experimentation will be an additional component and budget line in an existing project. This will help your organization to adopt and experiment with new approaches and tools in your programs rather than creating an isolated pilot.

The expected results from using these funds are sharable learnings and experiences that will benefit other organizations and communities. We will keep the implementation plan and reporting concise not to burden the already busy organizations unnecessarily.

The guidelines:

- Geographical focus: Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, Ethiopia, Somalia, Somaliland, Rwanda, Eritrea, Mozambik, Zambia, Malawi.

- In the concept phase, the NGOs should describe the participatory design process which would take place in the selected community. A separate template will be provided.

- During this round, Fingo is partnering with a social design company Butterfly Works. Participating NGOs and their local partners will be taken through orientation and training to facilitate community-led design processes in their projects. Butterfly Works provide support in formulating solid community experimentation concepts to be submitted to Fingo

- Start of the experiments: see the timeline

- Funds should be used by the end of the year 2022.

- Reporting: documentation and learning by the end of the experiment. Sharing experiences in a webinar during the implementation.

- Proposal concept max. 2 pages, a template will be provided (* see key questions below).

Questions and answers regarding the 3rd round of outsourced experimentations

1. **Who can respond to the call for the experimentation from Fingo Power bank?**

All Fingo member NGOs which have projects in the selected countries.

2. **Are there particular topics for community experimentation that would be of interest to Fingo Power bank?**

The experimentation focuses on supporting participating NGOs to embed an experimental component into their existing projects. The experimentation includes a participatory design and co-creation process at the community level. The aim is to create better solutions for the communities and learn as much as possible.

We emphasize integrating gender equality into the concept. Disability inclusion and climate change are other suggested cross-cutting issues.

The thematic areas (e.g., education, health,

livelihoods, child protection etc.) are not restricted but rather depend on each organization and its currently running projects.

3. Can NGOs who were conducting experiments with Powerbank in 2020 and 2021 apply again in the third round? Is it possible to use the third round to scale-up earlier experiment?

Yes, all Fingo member organizations can submit an offer. However, the offers should contain new propositions, not scale-up of an already tested model.

4. Is it possible to work as a consortium (e.g., several NGOs and partners together)?

Yes, it is. That is even preferable. Please describe the share of roles, responsibilities and budget between the different stakeholders in the funding application. For example, with multiple Fingo member organizations, the total budget in the offer can exceed €10 000 (although not per organization).

5. Are we supposed to develop innovations through experimentations? If yes, what does innovation mean?

Yes, do aim at having an innovation as a result (you may succeed or fail in doing so). You can watch this video to learn more what Fingo Powerbank means by innovation: https://www. fingo.fi/powerbank/video-what-innovation-means-development-ngos

6. What is the timeline for the process?

- Launch and Q &A: 25th October 2021

- Orientation, guidance and training on community-led design processes: October/ November 2021. Training sessions: Wed 10th 13-15, Tue 16th 13-14, Thu 18th 13-14.

- Formulation draft concept papers & feedback from Butterfly Works between 20th Nov to 10th December.

- Submit final concept offer using provided application form by 15th December 2021

- Receive final decision from Fingo by 20th December 2022

- Forming and signing contracts: by 15th January 2022

- Sharing lessons learned in a webinar: October-November 2022

- Submitting the final report: December 2022

7. Is Powerbank funding member organizations?

No. Fingo will not give funding to member organizations. However, Fingo will outsource experimentation work based on the offers submitted by selected NGOs. Fingo will then purchase (i.e., outsource) the experimentation work, including the lessons learned report & presentation, from the member organization. This is like consultancy services: ToR / call for

offers is released, and interested consultants respond. If the offer is accepted, a contract will be signed, and the work can start. Eventually, agreed deliverables should be produced, after which the consultant can invoice the purchaser of services.

8. Does our organization need to audit the invoiced money?

No. Since Fingo is not funding any organization, but rather purchasing services, we do not need to audit the funds.

Since this experimentation is regarded as a purchased service (and not a grant), as a consultancy service, there is no need for financial reporting. Just as a consultant would not be required to do financial reporting, similarly, the NGOs implementing these outsourced experimentations would not be required to do so.

The essential component is conducting the agreed work/tasks and deliverables, as documented in the contract (including the two annexes)

The invoices for payment can be sent according to these instructions: https://fingo.fi/laskutusosoitteet/

9. Do we need to conduct competitive bidding when purchasing e.g., devices with the Powerbank funds?

It is up to your organization to decide if and how you procure products and services. Note

that any devices purchased with the invoiced money may be considered as a property of Fingo. However, Fingo does not want to take any devices back from any organization but rather leave them in their original place (e.g., indefinite borrowing).

 How do we need to report?

Fingo will purchase the outsourced experimentation as well as a peer learning presentation and short report from your organization if the offer is accepted. The template for the presentation and the report will be provided by the start of the work. Work should be concluded and invoiced by the end of the 2022.

11. The outsourced experiments are relatively small in scale (€5000 - €10000). Where could we apply for more funding?

This Powerbank outsourcing is like an "experimentation voucher" to integrate into an already existing project. In this way, your organization is also co-implementing the Powerbank and increasing the understanding and use of new tools, methods and approaches with the peer NGO network.

For further funding and scaling-up, please contact Fingo for further information (e.g., Finnpartnership, MFA, EU, corporate collaboration etc.)

12. Should we engage with companies for/ during the experimentation?

It is not a requirement but indeed a recommended possibility if beneficial for the experiment.

13. What if the experimentation fails?

It is OK to try, possibly fail and learn from it. We will be happy as long as you have tried your best and shared the experiences, lessons learned, and recommendations with other NGOs.

14. What is there are, for example, 10 organizations all submitting the offer with €10 000 budget? As there is max. €80 000 in total in Fingos budget, what happens then?

Based on the offers, each accepted NGO/ consortium will eventually receive an amount between €5000 - €10 000, but it may be lower than initially budgeted.

15. Will there be a call for offers?

Yes, an invitation to tender document will be provided together with the application form

ANNEX 3:
Concept Templates

Experimentation Offer to Fingo Powerbank (2020)

(max 2 pages)

1. **Name of your organization(s):**

2. **Please describe the experimentation plan:**

Why is it important to conduct this experiment (in relation development challenges and objectives of your project)?

What is the solution[1] you are experimenting with?

Where and how will you conduct the experiment?

What is the possible/expected benefit and learning of the experimentation?

Which already on-going project is hosting the experiment?

How are you taking gender equality and disability inclusion into account?

Possible partners and their role:

Any additional support needed from Fingo during the implementation?

3. **Budget (€3000 – €10 000) and break-down of the main cost items:**

4. **Estimated schedule of the experiment**

Experimentation Offer to Fingo Powerbank (2021)

(max 2 pages)

1. **Name of your organization(s):**

2. **Please describe the proposed experimentation**

Why is it important to conduct this experiment (in relation development challenges/problem it will be addressing/aim of the experimentation)?

What is the solution[1] you are experimenting with?

Where will you conduct the experiment?

What is new to your organization in this experimentation (i.e., what were you doing for the first time?)

What is the possible/expected benefits and learnings of the experimentation?

Will experimentation be hosted on an ongoing project or stand alone?

How are you taking gender equality and disability inclusion into account?

Which Principles for Digital Development will be most relevant to your experimentation?

Which are possible partners and their roles?

3. **Budget (€3000 – €10 000) and break-down of the main cost items**

4. **Estimated schedule/work plan/implementation plan of the experiment**

Experimentation Offer to Fingo Powerbank (2022)

1. **Name of your organization(s):**

2. **Please describe the proposed Community experimentation**

Why is it important to conduct this experiment (in relation development challenges/problem it will be addressing/aim of the experimentation)?

Who are the stakeholders you will engage in the participatory design process.

Where will you conduct the experiment?

What is new to your organization in this experimentation and process (i.e., what will you be doing for the first time?)

How will you carry out the participatory design and co creation from the problem analysis to ideation?

What will be your experimentation process?

How will you integrate participatory design principles in your community experimentation processes?

What is the possible/expected benefits and learnings of the experimentation?

Will experimentation be part of an ongoing project or stand alone?

How are you taking gender equality and disability inclusion into account?

Which are possible partners and their roles?

3. **Budget (€5,000 – €10, 000) and break-down of the main cost items**

4. **Estimated schedule/work plan/ implementation plan of the experiment**

ANNEX 4:
Reporting Template

Outsourced Experimentation Report to Fingo Powerbank (2020/2021)

Name of your organization

2. **Describe the experimentation in regard to: Background/the need/the problem being addressed by the experimentation and the aim of the experiment**

3. **How was the solution experimented new to your organization (i.e., what were you doing for the first time?)**

4. **Any partnerships developed for the purposes of experimentation?**

5. **Challenges faced during the implementation and how they were handled**

6. **Key lessons learned from the experimentation?**

7. **What were gender equality and disability inclusion if any?**

8. **Which principles for digital development (https://digitalprinciples.org/wp-content/uploads/PDD_CoreTenets_v4.pdf) were most relevant to your experimentation?**

9. **Numbers/reach/beneficiaries**

10. **Possibility of scaling the experimentation with your own resource**

Outsourced Experimentation Report to Fingo Powerbank (2022)

1. **Background**

2. **Project Goal:**

3. **Work plan and timeline**

4. **Implementation of the Experiment**

5. **Describe the results including successes, failures, and lessons learned from the experiment. You can use stories/ quotes etc. to showcase your results.**

6. **Outline the challenges faced during implementation and how they were handled**

7. **How were gender equality and disability inclusion integrated into the experiment, if any?**

8. **Are you planning to continue or even scale up the experiment?**

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