

Annual Report of the Finnish Foundation for Media and Development 2018

The Finnish Foundation for Media and Development (Vikes) is a journalists' and media industry foundation whose main task is to promote freedom of expression and pluralism of media as the bases of democracy and social development. Vikes is the only development cooperation actor specialising in freedom of expression and journalism in Finland. Its collaborating organisations include 27 Finnish journalists' organisations and other media organisations.

The foundation was established in 2004 and registered itself with the Finnish Patent and Registration Office's Foundations Register on 18 March 2005.

Independent, diversified and ethical media play an undeniable role in democracy, as does a strong and multivoiced civil society. Solving global climate and economic and human rights problems requires that we have critical and expert journalism. Independent, professional media and open communication networks for citizens contribute to the sustainable development of both civil society and the economy, and thereby to eradicating poverty.

In 2018, Vikes conducted development cooperation work in six countries on three continents: in Myanmar, Nepal, Somalia, El Salvador, Honduras, and Nicaragua. Small-scale cooperation and planning on a new project were also carried out in Tanzania. Vikes conducts development cooperation in collaboration with local partners, which include media organisations (such as the Center for Investigative Journalism, in Nepal), trade unions (such as the National Union of Somali Journalists), and media of different scope (such as Onda Local, in Nicaragua). Our key target group are individual journalists, and in the case of Myanmar documentary filmmakers, whose professional training and public status Vikes supports.

Vikes enables Finnish journalists and media professionals to utilise their expertise in Finnish development cooperation. Vikes also offers Finnish journalists and media professionals the opportunity to participate in promoting freedom of expression in Finland, Europe as well as in developing countries.

Currently, the importance of freedom of expression as a fundamental human right is being highlighted even more, as media freedom, freedom of expression and the state of civil society are deteriorating around the world, including in Europe. In Finland,

the parameters of freedom of expression are also under strain, and this challenges Vikes to also bolster its activities domestically.

There is a clear need for Vikes' expertise and work promoting freedom of expression, which it meets by virtue of its own proficiency. Our work is performed by journalists for journalists, and we emphasise an inclusive approach and mutual learning among actors from Finland and other countries.

Administration and staff

Vikes' activities are managed by a Board in cooperation with the executive director. The board is appointed by a Council comprising representatives of the foundation's stakeholders. The Council's chair in 2018 was Aapo Parviainen. The Council convened for its statutory spring meeting on 22 May 2018 and its autumn meeting on 19 December 2018.

Under the rules updated in spring 2016, the Board comprises at least five and at most ten members. All are members of the Board. The Board convened five times during the year.

Board 1 January – 31 December 2018

Juha Rekola, chair
Aura Neuvonen, vice-chair
Pasi Huttunen
Sarri Kukkonen
Katri Nisula
Reeta Pöyhtäri
Olli Ylönen

The Board dealt with the foundation's development cooperation work and activity in Finland on global education, finances, fund-raising, activity development, recruitment, and Vikes' cooperation plans.

There were several staff changes in 2018. The executive director, Niklas Kaskeala, resigned in May and his replacement, Kirsi Koivuporras-Masuka, took parental leave in June. Auli Starck took over as acting executive director in August.

The part-time coordinator for the media and global education project in Finland, Riikka Seppälä, started parental leave in March and Sanna Jäppinen was appointed as her replacement. Esa Salminen was employed part-time as a communications specialist.

Of those responsible for development cooperation projects, Peik Johansson (Somalia), was employed full-time while those employed part-time included Aija

Kuparinen (Myanmar), Kimmo Lehtonen (Central America), and Eeva Simola (Nepal). Wali Hashi was employed part-time as a specialist for the Somalia project. Aija Kuparinen left Vikes for other work in March. The executive director took over responsibility for the Myanmar project.

Vikes offices, rented from the Union of Journalists in Finland (UJF), continued to be located in the Hakaniemi district of Helsinki, at Siltasaarenkatu 16.

The Mrs K.A. Koskisen Tili- ja Toimistopalvelu accounting service handled the bookkeeping. Lotta Kauppila, APA, and the auditing firm she represents, Tilintarkastusrengas Ltd, were the auditors.

Related party activities

The Foundations Act requires that a foundation's annual report include information of funds provided to closely related parties, in full or partial gratuities, financial benefits, as well as of other financial transactions with related parties. This information shall indicate the nature of the related party relationship, a description of the actions or benefits, and the monetary value of the activities or benefits. In addition, information on loans, liabilities, and the contingent liabilities of close related parties must be provided.

Due to the nature of its activities, neither funds nor financial benefits are granted to Vikes' related parties. Rather, our activities focus on carrying out development cooperation and global education projects and communicating about them. No gratuitous benefits, either partial or in full, were given to the foundation's related parties. All financial transactions done with related parties were remunerations.

Neither the members of the Board nor the Council received remunerations. The salary, including statutory ancillary costs, paid to the foundation's executive director and the acting executive director amounted to €73 045,30. Personnel expenses totalled €315 996,05. Vike's office space has been leased at market price (€337 a month) from the UJF, which is one of the collaborating organisations.

No loans, liabilities, or contingent liabilities were granted to related parties.

Vikes received donations totalling €48 015 to support its operations. Many of the donors belong to the foundation's extensive related parties. The donors are listed in the foundation's accounts. The donations were collected with a fundraising licence from the National Police Board to collect money (permit number RA / 2017/1252, valid to 7 January 2020 in Finland, except for the Åland Islands).

General review of activities and finances in 2018

In 2018, Vikes continued to work on four previously launched development cooperation projects funded by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs (MFA), and started on a new EU-funded development cooperation project in Somalia. In Finland, Vikes conducted a global education project for migrants on utilising freedom of speech in Finland, funded by the Helsingin Sanomat Foundation.

Since its inception, Vikes has been funded mainly from Finland's public development cooperation funds. In spring 2018, Vikes planned a follow-up to ongoing development projects as well as a new joint project to support the status of women journalists and equality in newsrooms in Nepal and Tanzania. We applied for funding for these from the MFA in May. The MFA's funding decisions were made just before Christmas. Vikes received funding for all five projects in the round of applications for 2018 totalling €1 810 000. Some projects last for two-years, others three. In its citation, the ministry praised Vikes' special thematic expertise and long-standing experience in strengthening freedom of expression and through that democracy.

Vikes' unique position as a Finnish development cooperation actor specialising in freedom of expression and the media was also reflected in the first Development Policy Results Report presented to Parliament in the autumn. Vikes is included in the report in the context of journalism training. Between 2015 and 2017, Vikes has trained 960 journalists and documentary filmmaking students in more than ten poor countries.

Vikes is a member of Fingo, the new umbrella organisation formed by Kepa (formerly the Service Centre for Development Cooperation) and Kehys (the Finnish NGDO Platform to the European Union) in 2018, and a member of the Finnish Somalia Network. Vikes worked closely with both of them during the year, including by attending events and providing information for their websites.

In order to carry out work in Finland and on global education, Vikes, in cooperation with Maailma.net, the Finnish branch of the global Oneworld news portal, applied for support from the MFA's development communications and global education project funding to produce a sustainability study module for journalism students at community colleges. The project was planned in the autumn with the Laajasalo and Voionmaa community colleges. We obtained a favorable funding decision in March 2019.

Under the leadership of the Estonian development organisation Mondo, Vikes took part in the EU's Development Education and Awareness Raising (DEAR) call for proposals for global education project funding. The application, prepared in the autumn, went through to the second round of applications at the end of the year,

and the planning work continues in 2019. The three-year project for European youth and journalists will aim to create an image of migration and immigration that is nuanced and respects human rights. Organisations from six different EU countries are involved in the project and its planning.

Restrictions on and security threats to journalists' work in 2018 were also reflected in Vikes's work, and especially that of its partners. In Nicaragua, the actions of the country's presidential couple against a civil society demanding change and the media rapidly took an alarming turn in the spring, when the government responded violently to public protests. One of the first of those killed was Ángel Gahona, a journalist who had taken part in training for an earlier Vikes project. Travel to the area by Vikes' project worker also had to be put off for security reasons and the planned training shifted to neighbouring countries.

In Somalia, apart from the unstable security situation, Vikes' time and resources were consumed by litigation over the use of the name of our partner, the National Union of Somali Journalists (NUSOJ). The former secretary general of NUSOJ took legal action against Vikes in Kenya and at the Market Court in Finland for trademark abuse. Vikes considers the allegations unfounded. Lawyers are handling the case and the UJF is covering the legal fees.

The predictability and sustained nature of financing, along with expanding our funding base, are essential for securing Vikes' operations and are in line with the strategy adopted in 2017. In addition to various funding applications to the MFA and EU for funding, in 2018 Vikes identified and tried out funding applications from new bodies, such as the National Board of Education and various foundations. At the same time, it should be noted that financial cuts, not only in development cooperation but also in education and research, were reflected in the increased competition in grant applications and very high quality of applications.

Communications and fundraising

Work continued in 2018 to develop our communications and fundraising activity, which is particularly aimed at boosting Vikes' fundraising online, communicating more effectively about Vikes' activity and its results, and offering our main target groups meaningful ways to support Vikes' work.

Vikes' website was fully revamped in 2018. The new site was launched at the end of August, and its tool for making donations was finalised in October.

The site looks modern and the content is designed to be user-oriented. Together with service designer Henriika Lindroos, the site was designed to be simpler, and more engaging and inspiring than the previous site, which focused more on

presenting Vikes' activities.

Graphic artist Lina Lievonen-Thapa overhauled the look of the site, and Kajahdus Ltd did the technical realisation.

The website has received plenty of positive feedback for its ease of use, visual character, and lively new written content. The number of visitors to the site rose by 15% following its launch (for the first five months of the new site compared to the last five months of the old site), although this was greatly influenced by seasonal variation and spending on advertising.

In 2018, the Vikes website had 16 695 unique visitors (in 2017 the number was 20 301). The website's most read pages (homepage, about us, our work) in the autumn indicate that people not only seek information from the site about Vikes and its work but also check out our news and how to make donations. The most read story of the year was the piece in English "Press Freedom in Ethiopia - Only the diaspora is allowed to speak", which had 834 unique readers.

The numbers of followers on key social media channels, Facebook and Twitter, also increased. On Facebook there was a 14% increase, with 2 570 followers. On Twitter the number of followers was 1 140.

The new website employed a more up-to-date fundraising solution, enabling both one-off payments by online banking and monthly donations paid by invoice and credit card. To aid fundraising, we also developed the idea of having regular sponsors, which was publicised in the autumn with videos about Tanzanian community radio journalists and Myanmar documentary filmmakers.

We received only two monthly donors in the autumn but about 10 one-off donors, some donating several hundred euros. Meanwhile, more private donations were made via the Facebook donation tool. According to the consultant Henriika Lindroos, this is a good start, as fundraising donors typically grow over the long term and this demands active work and campaigning.

In addition to online communications, Vikes showcased its activities at the World Village Festival and Journalism Day events in Finland. Vikes' work in Somalia also gained visibility at the Helsingin Rautavaara Museum. From 14 March to 2 September 2018, the museum hosted the exhibition "Mogadishu Then and Now - Images and Poems of a City", which included not only the photographs compiled by the museum and those of the Finnish-Somali Society, but also those of Peik Johansson, Vikes' Somalia project manager.

Vikes' projects in 2018

GLOBAL EDUCATION

Freedom of expression for migrants

Using the training project funded by the Helsinki Sanomat Foundation, “Migrants’ voices in public debate – utilizing freedom of speech in Finland”, Vikes, together with volunteer journalist mentors, researchers and other partners, helped reinforce immigrants’ media literacy and possibilities for following public debate, understanding the work of the Finnish media, and overall awareness of freedom of speech as a human right.

Apart from information, the participants were given practical tools to express views and freedom of speech, and journalist mentors offered tips on interview techniques, video filming, story building, and the diversity of the Finnish media field, as well as helping participants find perspectives, interviewees and potential publication outlets for the topics that interest them.

The training took place in three cities: Helsinki, Tampere, and Vaasa. The first workshops were held in April 2018 and the last event took place in November. The workshop language was English. This solution was workable as all participants had at least a fairly good grasp of English, and most of them excellent.

A total of 40 participants registered at the three locations. In the end, 12 people actively participated in the workshops. They come originally from Bangladesh, China, Nigeria, Philippines, Rwanda, Vietnam, UK, Brazil, and Indonesia.

At the third workshop, held in September, all participants in the training presented one topic they wanted to deal with in more detail. In each case the plans have not led to concrete results, but based on the feedback received, for most of the participants the training has resulted in at least a greater understanding of how the Finnish media operates, their opportunities for getting involved, and useful networking with journalism mentors, other trainers, and Vikes staff.

The journalist mentors also welcomed the experience and said they had gained many new perspectives and insights during the project.

DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION PROJECTS

Myanmar: Yangon Film School

Since 2005, the Yangon Film School (YFS) has been training Myanmar's first generation of independent documentary filmmakers. Vikes has been one of the

school's international supporters from the start. The school's main objective is to support civil society and intercultural dialogue and to create multivoiced media in Myanmar.

Films produced by students at the YFS have been screened all over the world and have won numerous awards at international and local film festivals. The school's films have also gained a lot of exposure via social media. The first documentaries and TV series have been made available for television distribution in Myanmar, which is important for reaching the local audience. In order to screen films outside the capital, the school also ran an activity called Traveling Cinema, which has reached over 2 000 young people in the most far-flung parts of the country. In 2018, the school launched new initiatives to produce documentary animation, including about sexual violence against women, and participatory video production with local communities.

In 2018, 12 new students started at the school, half of them women. Altogether, there were 36 students, 15 of whom were women. In 2018, students came from 12 different ethnic groups and two religions. A total of 262 training days took place during the year.

Due to the political situation in Myanmar, the YFS has been registered as an international organisation and has been administered from Berlin. In 2018, administrative responsibilities were put into local hands and the Berlin office was closed, although a few key employees are continuing in Berlin. Local staff members were trained on the job. In order to strengthen local capacity, students were also systematically trained as tutors and mentors for ensuing courses.

The goal is that the Yangon Film Foundation, which is responsible for the YFS, will handle the school's funding in the future and to take full control of its administration. The YFS has also succeeded in networking with new donors and gaining new sponsors for certain activities. However, securing sustainable core funding remains a challenge, and this is where Vikes' role has been highly significant.

In addition to international donors, the school acquires funds and valuable work experience for its students through its own production company, the Yangon Film Service. The company's output includes documentaries and videos for organisations in Myanmar and it employs former and present students from the school.

In spring 2018, Finnish volunteer professionals Tuula Mehtonen and Tuuli Alanärä taught a course on film editing for six weeks at the YFS.

Nepal: Support project for investigative journalism

Vikes has supported the Centre for Investigative Journalism (CIJ) in Nepal since the early 2010s. The two-year project, which finished at the end of 2018, focused on teaching digital journalism skills to Nepalese journalists, skills utilisation, and investigative journalism, as well as reinforcing the capacity of the CIJ.

In 2018, 15 journalists (seven of them women) from all over Nepal participated in the training organised by the CIJ. The centre also used the course for training the chief editors of local magazines and online media.

As part of the training, journalists wrote investigative articles for which they received financial support and expert advice from the CIJ. During the year in review, a total of 10 investigative stories were published, mostly exclusives. These made use of multimedia and presentation graphics in online publications. Investigative articles produced with CIJ support have been published or referenced by major Nepalese mainstream media, such as the daily newspaper The Kathmandu Post and the Himal Khabarpatrika weekly magazine, and digital papers such as Setopati.com.

Many investigative stories have triggered a public debate that has prompted change. An example is the case of the resignation of the country's Chief Justice Gopal Parajuli. The investigative article was written by Krishna Gyawali, valedictorian of the CIJ course and a respected journalist at the Kantipur daily. The first article on the issue had already been published by the CIJ. The publisher, chief editor, and journalist were prosecuted for "contempt of court".

The Nepalese government drew on an article on the use of forced labour by powerful figures in remote regions and urged agencies to take action to put an end to the practice, which has long been prohibited. A story on the misuse of poverty benefits prompted local authorities to act. And following a story on MPs' abuse of housing perks, some of them returned the money involved.

Due to its influential stories, CIJ's visibility has increased and its links to various media houses have strengthened. By 22 March, the CIJ website had had 678 130 readers. The top stories of the year were once again compiled into a book to be distributed at various events. The CIJ also translated the English Guide to Investigative Journalism into Nepali.

CIJ's expertise was strengthened during 2018 through travel to international conferences, international training, staff training, and equipment procurement.

In March, CIJ's program manager Saurav Kolakshyapati, editor Shiva Gaunle and chairperson Namrata Sharma visited Finland. A workshop was held by Vikes and the CIJ on a possible future joint venture. The guests also got acquainted with the

Finnish media environment and visited the MFA. To support the project's exit strategy, Vikes arranged an occasion to hear how three different organisations – Long Play Ltd, the Finnish Inter Press Service, and Finnwatch – finance their operations. Vikes and the Finnish-Nepalese Society held a joint debate, where the Nepalese guests talked about their work and developments in their country's press freedom. The debate following the opening presentations was lively.

In the autumn 2018, an external evaluation was started, and completed in early 2019. Binod Bhattarai and Raghu Mainali of the Nepalese consultancy The Writing Workshop evaluated the digital investigative journalism project in Nepal as being appropriate, but in their recommendations highlighted the need to support especially the involvement of women journalists and to continue to provide basic proficiency training.

Nicaragua, El Salvador, Honduras: Independent Media Support Project

The Nicaraguan regional independent media support project continued in 2018. The main aim of the project is to train and support, through expert assistance, independent media and journalists from Nicaragua, El Salvador and Honduras to develop their business operations and to work in an innovative manner using investigative journalism.

During the year in review, the project had a total of 142 participants involved in training and workshops.

Special attention was paid to the safety of journalists and civil society actors. As a result of Nicaraguan government harassment, some 70 journalists now live in exile, most of them in Costa Rica. However, Vikes' partners Onda Local and Centro Humboldt were able to continue their work, although the situation forced them to temporarily suspend activities and change their schedules. One of Vikes' priorities for 2018 was to support above all those journalists and NGO journalists who were able to operate in the country despite the dangerous situation.

The project also supported the journalists' networking in the region, co-production between media, and the production of their own reportage. Regional reportage collaboration was carried out with the El Salvadorian partner El Faro, which they conducted with a network of Nicaraguan journalists.

The project has a direct link to NGO activities through its partner, the environmental organisation Centro Humboldt. The project supports the Centro Humboldt's outreach activities and, through this, training for Nicaraguan journalists on environmental issues. In addition, the project will provide training for local youth environmental communications networks.

Throughout the year in review we continued to support networking, cooperation, and vocational training for journalists and media especially. A notable event in this respect was the annual Central American Forum of Journalism (ForoCAP) organised annually by El Faro, in which partners and other independent media journalists from Honduras and Nicaragua took part with Vikes' support. Business development was supported with the help of consulting and training by the Sembra Media consultancy firm. Based on these activities, business and marketing strategies for partners have been built up over the past year.

For security reasons, the Sembra Media follow-up workshop aimed at developing a business and marketing strategy had to be taken outside the country, to Guatemala. The first workshop had been held in Managua in May. The workshop held in Guatemala also initiated joint work with two Honduran independent digital media (El Criterio and ContraCorriente) on business and marketing strategy development.

The training work in Guatemala resulted in an agreement to cooperate with the El Salvador office of the global development and education organisation IREX, which provided Vikes partners with four-day security training with all costs covered.

Somalia: Freedom of speech, journalism, and public service media project and Strengthening Somali media skills for better journalism

In 2018, Vikes worked on two development projects in Somalia. The MFA-funded Somalia media support project continued in 2018 with the aim of improving the skills of Somali journalists and supporting the development of the Somali state media towards public service broadcasting. More balanced and diversified media will increase the public's access to information and contribute to the peaceful and democratic development of Somali society.

An external evaluation of the first phase of the project, completed early in the year, concluded that Vikes' work in Somalia was appropriate, highly productive, and effective.

In 2018, Vikes also launched a second project with EU funding, the main objective of which is to support the professional organisations of journalists and to improve the professional skills of Somali national television staff.

The projects' activities are mutually supportive and share the same partners: the National Union of Somali Journalists, Somali National Television SNTV and the Somali Ministry of Information, Posts and Telecommunications. Training events were also organised with the Somaliland Journalists Association.

In 2018, Somalia projects provided training in basic journalism and professional ethics, labour law and trade unionism, and for SNTV staff on news and discussion programming. In Somaliland, training was provided on basic journalism and professional ethics, as well as for women journalists to strengthen their position and skills.

A total of 369 journalists, over a hundred of whom were women, took part in training sessions across Somalia and Somaliland in 2018. Experienced Finnish and Somali journalists acted as trainers.

In addition, SNTV was supplied with studio cameras, microphones, speakers, headphones, and lighting. As an initial impetus for collaboration in the production of children's and youth programmes, SNTV produced a short documentary about a boy shoe shiner, which was also broadcast on the Vikes' YouTube channel.

Finn Church Aid, the Nenäpäivä (Red Nose Day) Foundation, and the UJF contributed to the projects' co-financing. In addition, the MFA granted support for the national co-financing component for EU project support. There was also close collaboration with the Forgiveness Campaign devised by Vikes project specialist Wali Hashi.

Translation: Mark Waller