



Linking NGOs with Capacity Services (LINCS)

Root Change LINCS (Linking NGOs with Capacity Services) methodology is designed to catalyze wholesale change in the way that capacity building services are provided to local development actors. LINCS is a unique and proven approach to mapping the needs and capacities of key actors and connecting local demand for capacity building services with local supply.

Capacity building of public and private sector actors in developing countries has been described as the “missing link” for generating long-term, sustainable impact in international development initiatives. However, traditional approaches to building organizational capacity have their own challenges: they are costly and inefficient; fragmented and short-term, rather than holistic and sustained; and determined by policy-makers in the North rather than practitioners in the South.



Capacity Service Negotiations at Zambia LINCS Event

Root Change believes that in order to overcome these challenges, it is essential to build upon the knowledge, skills, and experience of local capacity building service providers. At the same time it is important to link these organizations with each other, as well as with the local NGOs and government institutions in need of organizational strengthening services.

A Root Change LINCS application includes the following:

- Capacity assessments of local NGO and government participants to identify service needs
- Workshops for service providers to assist them in clearly articulating and packaging service offerings
- A network mapping of pre-LINCS interactions between providers and consumers in the local market for capacity services
- A LINCS marketplace where local organizations interact directly with local service providers, discussing needs and bidding for services that meet their needs
- Matching of service providers and seekers
- Customization of services for interested buyers and execution of service contracts.

- Focus group discussions with providers and consumers to capture learning and build momentum around local capacity building service provision

Our team has facilitated LINCS events in Bolivia, Ecuador, India and Zambia, connecting hundreds of local providers and seekers, and brokering dozens of capacity building services. In each case, LINCS events have proven to be transformational to participants, and have been positively received by practitioners and policy-makers alike.

For **NGO and local government participants**

LINCS is often a first opportunity to define their own capacity building needs, and negotiate services directly with a range of providers. This in itself is capacity building, because services are traditionally procured by donors, and local organizations are given little say in the how services are provided and who they are delivered by.

“It’s exciting to know that there is such a range of capacity building services available in Zambia and that NGOs can have a choice to negotiate for what they want. This was a capacity building session in itself for most people here.” – Priscilla Jere, Executive Director, OneWorld Zambia

For **service providers** LINCS is an opportunity to reach a new and more diverse consumer group. It is also an opportunity to build sustainable relationships with

For **policy-makers**, LINCS represents a highly efficient mechanism for delivering capacity building to local actors – Pact Institute has estimated that the LINCS market mechanism generates savings of over 10% on prevailing service rates.

The outputs of a LINCS event include:

- Signed agreements for local capacity builders to provide targeted services to local NGOs and government institutions.
- New and strengthened social capital among local capacity building providers and between providers and those seeking capacity building opportunities.
- A directory of capacity building services offered by local providers that can be used and built upon beyond the event itself.
- An array of qualitative and quantitative data around the supply and demand for capacity building that can be used to identify patterns and develop strategies for strengthening local service provision.

For more information on how you and your partner organizations can take advantage of Root Change’s LINCS services, please contact Jacob Gray at jgray@rootchange.org

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