

Terms of Reference (TORs) Urban Futures Global Linking, Learning & Action (LLA) Consultancy

About Hivos

Hivos is an international development organization guided by humanist values. Together with citizens and their organizations, we aim to contribute towards just, inclusive and life-sustaining societies where people have equal access to opportunities, rights, and resources. We partner with others in the Middle East, Africa, Asia and Latin America on three impact areas: civic rights; gender equality, diversity and inclusion, and climate justice. Our approach is solution-driven, and we build broader movements for change by amplifying and connecting voices. For more information about Hivos, please visit our website at:

www.hivos.org

About Urban Futures

Hivos' Urban Futures (UF) program aims to contribute to more inclusive, climate-resilient cities and urban food systems, where young people collaborate to voice their priorities, influence decisions, and seize opportunities in the food sector, with shorter value chains providing healthy, sustainable food that is accessible, affordable, and attractive.

UF addresses innovative and inclusive food system approaches (multi-stakeholder involvement, city-region food systems, climate-resilient cities) to improve access to sustainable, diverse, and nutritious food and to ensure food security. Operating in 10 intermediary cities in five countries, UF supports local partners and innovators, especially young people (between 15 and 35), in collaborations to build more inclusive, climate-resilient urban food systems while voicing their priorities, influencing decisions, and seizing opportunities in the food sector. UF is active in ten intermediary cities/ city regions in Colombia (Cali and Medellin), Ecuador (Manabi-MANPANOR and Quito-Choco Region), Indonesia (Bandung and West Manggarai), Zambia (Chongwe and Kitwe), and Zimbabwe (Bulawayo and Mutare). These intermediary cities vary in size and have in common that they are rapidly growing, connect metropolitan and rural areas or different groups of cities within urban systems, and manage flows of people, goods, capital, information, and knowledge. They each have a specific set of challenges and opportunities. We aim to achieve this through multi-stakeholder collaborations and locally owned innovations. Hivos is the global fund and program manager, complementing and amplifying these local experiences by linking and learning, advocacy, communication, and strategic coherence.

As of January 2023, Hivos, in partnership with Fondation Botnar, launched the Urban Futures Program in response to the increasing impact of climate change on food security and the environment. Hivos' Urban Futures (UF) program (2023-2027) aims to contribute to more inclusive, climate-resilient cities and urban food systems, where young people collaborate to voice their priorities, influence decisions, and seize opportunities in the food sector, with shorter value chains that provide healthy, sustainable food that is accessible, affordable, and attractive.

Program implementation is being led by local partners in each city, taking a climate justice approach that aligns with Hivos' strategic compass. To achieve this, we aim to achieve the following outcomes:

1. Inclusive, transparent, and participatory food policies and governance strategies that support youth and gender equality through multi-stakeholder collaboration.

2. Youth-driven narratives of inclusive, conscious, and climate-resilient cities promote behavioral change and improved consumption patterns that favor sustainable, healthy, and food heritage practices.
3. Agri-food systems adopt sustainable, regenerative, and climate-resilient practices.
4. Increased resources and opportunities from diverse stakeholders—private, public, multilateral, and community-based create an inclusive and climate-adapted entrepreneurial ecosystem that supports youth and women's participation in food system initiatives.

As program manager, Hivos engages partners and innovators (especially young people) and provides grants and demand-led technical assistance, capacity building, linking and learning, advocacy, and communications, including through our partner, Yayasan Humanis dan Inovasi Sosial (Humanis) and RUAF. Humanis is Hivos' affiliate for the program in Indonesia.

The Linking, Learning & Action (LLA) Strategy Consultant will design and deliver (under Hivos leadership) the participatory development and operationalization of an integrated LLA Framework for Urban Futures. This includes developing a multi-year Learning Agenda, designing and piloting a practical LLA Toolbox, facilitating inclusive sessions, and aligning linking and learning with M&E, advocacy, and communication strategies. The consultancy will ensure the Learning Agenda reflects local realities while maintaining global coherence and strengthening the capacity of Hivos, Humanis, and partners to sustain LLA activities at global, regional, and local levels.

1. Objectives

The consultancy will design and deliver the (under Hivos leadership) participatory development and operationalization of a single, integrated Linking, Learning & Action (LLA) Framework for Urban Futures. At its core, this framework incorporates the multi-year Learning Agenda, which defines learning priorities and guides program action. Specifically, the consultancy will:

- Develop a living, multi-year Learning Agenda as the central component of the LLA Framework. This process will be participatory and youth/partner-centered, identifying priority learning questions, thematic areas, and mechanisms for reflection and adaptation.
- Organize available resources and consolidate a practical Linking, Learning & Action Toolbox that enables continuous updating of the Learning Agenda and sustainability of the LLA Framework beyond the consultancy period.

2. Methodological Approach

2.1 Lead the participatory development and support the implementation of an Integrated Linking, Learning & Action Framework with Multi-Year Learning Agenda as its Core Methodology.

The consultancy will design and deliver (under Hivos leadership) the development and support the implementation of a single, integrated Linking, Learning & Action (LLA) Framework. At its core, this framework will embed a multi-year Learning Agenda as the main methodology to define priorities, structure participatory processes, and generate actionable evidence. A practical Toolbox will also be piloted to ensure sustainability and continuous updating of the framework beyond the consultancy period. This integrated approach will:

- Work closely and interact regularly with the Hivos/Humanis Global Core Team (including Global and Regional staff as well as RUAF) to ensure alignment of implementation plan.
- Conduct a comprehensive desk review of key Hivos, Humanis, and Urban Futures documents (UF project proposal, Hivos Strategic Compass, existing L&L documents, Global reports, Knowledge Management resources, Fondation Botnar's Evidence to Action Strategy, outcome harvesting reports, and annual/semi-annual reports) to inform the integrated framework and Learning Agenda.
- Identify and prioritize programmatic learning questions with global, regional, and local partners, including youth groups. Develop a multi-year Learning Agenda as a living roadmap aligned with the Urban Futures Theory of Change, Monitoring & Evaluation, and advocacy and communication strategies. The agenda will define priorities, questions, and an action plan detailing activities, responsibilities, and timelines at global, regional, and city levels. Its development will rely on participatory, youth- and partner-centered processes that generate evidence, surface lessons, and co-create practical recommendations. This will include regional implementation plans and virtual sessions with youth and partners to strengthen collaboration, knowledge exchange, and innovation across Urban Futures' cities.
- Ensure that the Learning Agenda is collectively discussed with youth representatives from different regions (annex 1), through at least one joint session that guarantees inclusiveness, legitimacy, and ownership of the identified priorities and recommendations.
- Apply inclusive and youth-centered approaches that actively address power dynamics and ensure meaningful engagement.
- Ensure local relevance and global coherence, framing the integrated strategy as a living document adaptable to emerging evidence and priorities.

2.2 Consolidate a Practical Linking & Learning Toolbox

The consultancy will:

- Design and pilot a practical Linking, Learning & Action (LLA) Toolbox that consolidates adaptable methodologies, resources, and guidelines available for participatory learning. The Toolbox will support youth engagement, ensure equitable participation, and provide mechanisms for the continuous updating of the Learning Agenda.

3. Deliverables

1. Workplan for the Consultancy – Detailed roadmap including timelines, agendas for participatory spaces, interview protocols, survey designs, and proposed deliverables.

2. Integrated Linking, Learning & Action Framework – One comprehensive document including:

- Multi-level Action Plan (global, regional, city-region: activities, responsibilities, timelines).
- The multi-year Learning Agenda (embedded: learning questions, thematic areas, evidence-generation roadmap).
- A Learning Agenda that addresses at least one learning question identified jointly with the teams and youth.
- Documentation of participatory processes with youth and partners, including at least one joint cross-regional youth session for collective validation.

3. Linking, Learning & Action (LLA) Toolbox – Final practical product consolidating methodologies, resources, and guidelines to sustain continuous learning.

4. Final Consultancy Report – Summarizing all activities, achievements, lessons learned, and recommendations, with annexes containing relevant tools, documentation, and references.

4. Language & interpretation

English is the official language of the Urban Futures program. Youth sessions will include simultaneous interpretation into Spanish and Bahasa Indonesia. Interpretation is organized and budgeted by the Consultant and must be reflected in the workplan and budget.

5. Consultancy period

The consultancy will be from December 2025 to May 2026.

6. Scope of the assignment

Level of Involvement with Youth

Annex 1. Mandatory Minimum Criteria for Youth Sessions (procedures & templates).

Governance & Responsibilities

Accountable lead: Hivos (Program Manager) is accountable for all deliverables and final approvals.

Responsible party: The Consultant is responsible for designing, drafting and delivering the LLA Framework, Learning Agenda, Toolbox and reports, and for facilitating sessions.

Supporting parties: Humanis and RUAF provide technical input and facilitate access to partners and youth.

Decision-making: Hivos approves the workplan, intermediate outputs and final deliverables. The Consultant implements approved activities and manages day-to-day execution.

7. Organizational/Consultant Profile

We encourage organizations and/or consultants with the following skills to apply:

- Minimum of ten years of experience coordinating and supporting knowledge management, LLA strategies and methodologies, preferably in Southern Africa, Latin America, and Indonesia.
- Proven expertise in working with global or regional projects involving multi-stakeholders in multicultural environments.
- Strong facilitation skills in multilingual settings using innovative methodologies.
- Demonstrated ability to host virtual events, engaging participants across time zones. For the non-English participants, the translation service needs to be included/provided by the Consultancy firm.
- Demonstrated ability to design, adapt, and apply innovative LLA methodologies.
- Experience developing capacity-building programs focused on knowledge management techniques.
- Excellent analytical skills and proficiency in writing detailed reports synthesizing findings from complex initiatives.
- Demonstrated experience working with youth, particularly in participatory processes.
- Proven track record of engagement in food systems is desirable.
- Fluency in English is mandatory. Proficiency in Spanish and Bahasa Indonesia is preferred.

- The consultant must present at least one example of proven experience in developing learning agendas for multi-year, multi-country projects.
- Applications will be in English (if necessary, selected candidates will be contacted for a short clarification call).

8. Application and selection

Eligibility.

Organizations or independent consultants with the profile described under Organizational/Consultant Profile.

Application package (submit as a single PDF):

1. Cover letter (max 2 pages): Relevant experience with multi-country linking & learning and youth-centered processes.
2. Technical proposal (max 8 pages):
 - Methodology: How you will design and deliver the work.
 - Workplan: Timeline with milestones.
 - Risks & mitigation: Key risks and how you will address them.
 - Facilitation approach: Plan for multilingual youth sessions.
 - Sample tools: Up to two tools you propose to pilot (brief description or mock-ups).
3. Team CVs (max 2 pages each): Roles and level of effort.
4. Work sample: At least one multi-year Learning Agenda you developed (link or annex).
5. Final budget (USD): Level of effort by role and assumptions, including all taxes.
6. References (two): Name, role, organization, email, phone, and your working relationship.

Timeline

- Questions deadline: Two calendar days before the call closes on the Hivos portal.
- Interviews/presentations: The top 3–5 shortlisted applicants may be invited to a clarification call; invitations will be sent by email.
- Award notification: Within 30 calendar days after call closure.

Notes

- Scope: All sessions with young people must follow the mandatory criteria in Annex 1, including the preparation package, facilitation standards, and timing parameters.
- Deliverables: Document participatory processes with youth and partners (per Annex 1 standards), including at least one joint cross-regional youth session.

Annex 1

Minimum Methodological Criteria for Youth Session(s)

Pre-Meeting Preparation

- Participants will receive a preparation package that includes a brief background on the UF Program's youth engagement approach and reflections on their experiences with the program.
- If youth participants are asked to do a presentation, they will receive a one-page document with clear instructions to prepare a 2-minute presentation on a meaningful engagement experience (positive or negative) from their city.
- Youth may also receive a survey to gather information and initial thoughts to develop the workshop.
- All participants, especially youth, will submit a profile of up to 100 words with a photo. They may include their Instagram handle if available and only with explicit consent. Profiles will be compiled and shared in advance to help participants get to know each other and lower language barriers.
- The profile file (including photos and optional handles) will be translated into Indonesian before distribution (at minimum using DeepL).

During the session

- Ensure that sessions are held in a respectful and non-discriminatory environment, where all youth feel safe to express their views.
- Apply participatory methods (e.g., group discussions, creative tools, interactive exercises) that allow young people to actively shape the conversation.
- Use clear, inclusive, and culturally relevant language.
- Actively address power dynamics (age, gender, social status) to ensure that marginalized voices (young women, LGBTIQ+, indigenous youth, etc.) are heard.
- Include time for youth to reflect on the process and provide feedback, ensuring their inputs shape the Learning Agenda and program decisions.

Format and Timing

- Duration: Maximum of 2 hours per day (to be discussed with consultant team).
- Participants: Minimum of 20 youth representatives from the 10 city regions, plus Local Partners, Hivos, Humanis, and the Botnar Foundation.
- Platform: Microsoft Teams or Zoom.