



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Sohini Baliga, 703-622-8562 or sohinibaliga@gmail.com**KELLOGG FOUNDATION MAKES MAJOR GRANT TO FIRST VOICE AFRICA**

SILVER SPRING, MD - FEBRUARY 01, 2008: First Voice Africa (FVA), whose mission is to bring information affluence to all regardless of location, education, or wealth, has been awarded a five-year grant totaling USD 909,815 by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation for the CommShare Project, which aims to build vital communications capacity in rural communities in Southern Africa.

FVA – a registered Kenyan non-profit organization, is the African regional office of First Voice International (FVI). FVI is uniquely endowed with a valuable technology asset – five percent of the broadcast capacity of AfriStar™ and AsiaStar™ satellites – giving FVI and FVA the ability to bring non-commercial, humanitarian, audio programming and web based material to millions who are information poor in Africa.

“There is frequently a critical communication gap between local communities and the many institutions trying to make a difference in Africa,” says Humphrey Mwaura, FVA’s Regional Representative. “You have two things simultaneously,” adds Kirk Talbott, President of FVI and FVA Board member. “You have untapped invaluable indigenous knowledge about local problems and solutions, and a wealth of information that remains trapped in institutions who have the desire but lack the means to deliver it to people in remote areas who need it most. FVA and FVI already have the experience and technology to bridge that gap and will bring both to bear upon the CommShare Project.”

The W.K.Kellogg Foundation has already identified “zoom sites” - geographically smaller areas, large enough for serious decision-making to have impact, yet are small enough for all parts of the community to take part – where the CommShare project will:

- Create community centers that are conceptualized and run by the communities themselves
- Train local leaders to become leaders in information gathering and dissemination
- Deliver relevant and regularly updated content from community generated materials
- Create a framework which attracts the interest of national and regional stakeholders and facilitates additional investments to help maintain and expand these pilot sites.

The project will begin with a focus in Zimbabwe, South Africa, Mozambique and Botswana, eventually expanding to include Lesotho, Malawi, and Swaziland.

About W.K. Kellogg Foundation:

The W.K. Kellogg Foundation was established in 1930 to help people help themselves. Specifically the organization supports children, families and communities as they strengthen and create conditions that propel vulnerable children to achieve success as individuals and as contributors to the larger community and society. For greatest impact, the Foundation targets its grants toward specific areas, including health; food systems and rural development; youth and education; and philanthropy and volunteerism. Grants are concentrated in the United States, Latin America and the Caribbean, and the southern African countries of Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, South Africa, Swaziland and Zimbabwe. For further information, please visit the Foundation’s website at www.wkcf.org

About First Voice International:

FVI seeks to ensure that people living in poverty and remote places get the information they need to improve their lives, have the means to communicate their needs and wants and are able to share what they know with others - in their own voice. We strive to reach the most people for the least cost by combining satellite and other technologies. We bypass the isolating effects of illiteracy and remoteness, and we routinely deliver information to people in areas lacking reliable electricity, telephone or Internet service.

First Voice International: Bringing a world of “information affluence” for all, regardless of location, education, or wealth.