Project summary

1. GENERAL INFORMATION	
Name of the project: Amplifying Indian CSO's role and effectiveness in implementation of SDGs through awareness building and multi-stakeholder connect.	
National platform(s): Voluntary Action Network India	
Acronym(s): VANI	**Number of members:** 590
Intervention country/ies: India	
Start and end dates: December 2018 – November 2019	**Project duration:** 1 year
Total amount of the project in euro: 19,002 €	**Total amount of the project funded by Forus:** 15,200 €

2. DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECT
Presentation of the project:
In India, conversation on SDGs till 2018, was limited to macro level players like UN, Government (through Niti Aayog, think tank set up by Government for SDGs implementation) and few top VOs. There was also inadequate association about SDGs amongst Indian CSOs (especially those working at grass-root level) due to limited awareness and/or lack of linkage of SDGs with their work area. The project, thus, focussed on localisation of SDGs through collectivisation and awareness generation of small and grass-root level CSOs. They were encouraged to play an enhanced role in implementation, processes and monitoring of SDGs (focussing on Leave No One Behind).
Main achievements during the project:
The project helped VANI build the capacities of Indian (small and grass-root level) CSOs by raising their awareness about SDGs, its processes, linkages with Centrally Sponsored Schemes and their work area, state level progress variances. The raised awareness and peer-linkage resulted in increased interest of grass-root level CSOs to play a vital role in implementation and monitoring of SDGs at local levels. Advocacy (undertaken both at organizational level as well as through collective efforts) helped in Government (Niti Aayog) initiating an inclusive consultation process with (and by) Civil Society in the initial stages of VNR 2020 formulation.
Who are the stakeholders targeted by the project and which were the mechanisms for their participation?
The main stakeholders targeted by the project included Voluntary Development Organisations (both National and grass-root level VDOs), state networks, Government (Niti Aayog, Ministry of Corporate Affairs, Department of Public Enterprises, Ministry of Heavy Industries and Public Enterprises), Civil Society Leaders, Academic Institutions. The mechanisms for participation included online study, one on one meetings, Regional Level Dialogues and National Level Multi-Stakeholder Consultation.

3. IMPACT OF THE PROJET
Please describe the impact of the project in terms of capacity building
The project helped in building the capacities of Voluntary Organisations across the country. Detailed questionnaire sent in the beginning of the project to over (then) 560 membership-based organisations of VANI served dual purpose – i) sought responses to assess awareness level about SDGs and its processes and ii) information tool to increase interest.
Subsequently three regional level consultations helped to directly collectivise 90 representatives from 80 organisations from across 13 states in India. Moreover, the anchoring partner and key participants were also anchors/part of state/sub-networks like Chagvan (Chhattisgarh State Network), Mahavan (Maharashtra State Network), Jharvan (Jharkhand State Network) and Kaval (Kerala State Network). This ensured in deepening localisation of efforts. The project entailed advocacy with government for effective inclusion of

CSOs in SDG implementation, processes and monitoring. A National Level Multi-Stakeholder Consultation was organised in Delhi, in November 2019 to encourage effective CSOs participation in drafting of India's VNR 2020 and at High Level Political Forum. Subsequently, Niti Aayog organised a meeting of CSOs (including VANI) on India's VNR 2020 and urged the theme based CSOs to organise nation-wide Consultations for inputs into VNR.

Did the project have a concrete impact on public policies?

VANI advocated with Niti Aayog and urged the government for an effective inclusion of CSOs in SDG implementation and VNR preparation. A meeting of CSOs on India's VNR 2020 on implementation of SDGs was organised by Niti Aayog in late November, in which VANI was invited along with some key CSOs. During the meeting Government's intent on planning ways to integrate CSOs perspective, data and inputs into India's VNR 2020 were discussed. Theme based CSOs were advised to hold Nation-wide consultation to gather inputs for VNR.

What are the potential long-term impacts of the project? What continuity will be given to the project?

The project has helped in localisation of SDGs and build the capacities of CSOs. This shall enhance their engagement with Urban Local Bodies for implementation and monitoring of progress on SDGs. Since VANI works on SDG 17 (building partnerships*) VANI will continue to promote SDG agenda through multi-sectoral linkages.

(*In addition to the activities enlisted under the Forus project, in 2019, VANI undertook a study entitled, "Advancing Sustainable Development through Goal 17". The findings suggested the need for revitalising of South-South and North-South Co-operation with equitable participation of CSOS. VANI also organised various Multi-Stakeholders Development Conclaves in different states including Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Assam, Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh with participation from political leaders, Government functionaries, corporate and industrial bodies UN Agencies, Donors, media and academic, with the intent to create multi-stakeholder engagement platform to collectively take forward Agenda 2030 in India.)

4.   RELATION WITH FORUS

To what extent has the project contributed to strengthening the Forus' network?

Since 2012, Forus has supported its members in their activities related to the Agenda 2030. Through our contribution in Forus's newsletters, VANI has shared with Forus Network members our experience from project - including urgent need for Localisation of SDGs and building inter-sectoral linkages to realise Agenda 2030 and Leave No One Behind. Also, the project provided VANI an opportunity to raise awareness about Forus and its work amongst our members.

What was the added value of Forus' support to this project?

VANI would like to acknowledge with thanks the immense help extended by Forus Team in streamlining of project in pre-project phase. The recommendations of the Peer Support Committee helped in providing the project the much-needed direction. The briefing session by Programme and Finance Team at the start of project helped VANI with effective planning of the project. Thereafter, Forus Team was extremely prompt in responding to call for any support required during the implementation phase. The advice provided from time to time helped add value to the reports generated.

Have you produced a deliverable that could be useful for other Forus members?

During the project different collaterals were produced which include: Online Questionnaire; Discussion Document; Consultation Reports; Note for Government; and a four paged Localising SDG amongst Indian CSOs document.

The four paged Localising SDG amongst Indian CSOs is a sharp and succinct document on VANI's journey in furthering Agenda 2030 amongst Indian CSOs. This may serve useful as reference tool for other Forus Members for undertaking advocacy with different stakeholders.

What are your recommendations for platforms wishing to implement a similar project in the future?

At the project implementation level we would like to recommend three important things to platforms include:

1.   Sound Planning at the beginning of the project

2. Regular review to measure the project progress
3. Timely documentation of the activities undertaken

Recommendations to CSO platforms implementing project on Agenda 2030 include:

1. Importance of Collectivisation
2. Need to make CSOs aware and encourage them to expand the focus of their work beyond their area of work and think holistically
3. Strengthening of inter-sectoral linkages for achieving Agenda 2030
4. Importance of Localisation to ensure Inclusion