



INTERNATIONAL FORUM OF
NATIONAL NGO PLATFORMS

ANNUAL REPORT 2017



TABLE OF CONTENTS

IFP, A GLOBAL STRUCTURED NETWORK	PAGE 3
ACTIVITY REPORT	PAGE 6
CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT activities	Page 6
ADVOCACY for an economic, social & environmental change	Page 10
COMMUNICATION	Page 12
FINANCIAL REPORT	PAGE 14
PARTNERS & ALLIANCES	PAGE 16
HIGHLIGHTS 2015-2016	PAGE 18

EDITORIAL

Miguel Santibañez
IFP Chair



The International Forum of National NGO Platforms (IFP) brings together 69 national development NGO platforms and 7 Regional Coalitions in Africa, the Americas, Asia, Europe and Pacific, which together account for more than 22,000 organisations.

2017 marked a turning point for the IFP. Its official establishment in Paris as a legal autonomous entity was effective on January 1st and its new decentralised, multicultural executive team of 5 people was recruited. Based in 4 different countries – Uruguay, Ireland, South Africa and France – the team works closely with the IFP's members and governing bodies (the Council and Executive Committee) – on the implementation of the 2016-2020 strategy.

The strategy, whose main pillars were adopted by the 2015 General Assembly, has 3 main objectives:

- develop the capacities of its members at the regional and national levels, becoming an influential player in terms of the NGO learning process;
- advocate at national, regional and international levels, especially regarding the monitoring and implementation of the 2030 Development Agenda;
- strengthen the IFP's institutional, organisational and operational capacities.

Over the years, several donors have supported the IFP, such as the French Development Agency (AFD), the Fondation de France, the Ford Foundation and UNDP. In 2016 it signed a political and financial partnership with the European Commission until 2021, providing the IFP and its members with the means to implement its 2016-2020 strategy.

Another decisive step for our network in 2017 was the decision to change our organisation's brand and name from IFP-FIP to Forus. This was approved by the General Assembly by 97% of votes cast online.

The new name and branding aims to better reflect the purpose and ambition of the network and its members. Forus conveys the connections between members, knowledge-sharing and common values. Forus is the Latin word for bridge or gangway – it connects us to the world. It is also the name for honeycomb, and all of us, the IFP and our members, are indissolubly connected. The implicit meaning is that we are part of something bigger that only works if we collaborate.

The new strapline "Connect Support Influence" describes the key aims and activities of the network. This change, effective starting with the 2018 GA in September, aims to pursue the objectives of our network in a more incisive way and with a new image.

2017 was clearly a year of growth and strengthening of the network, but it also represented an opportunity to work more closely with members and create opportunities for sharing best practices between peers and building strong alliances through capacity development activities and workshops. In addition, the main activities included the launch of the Leadership Development Programme, which aims to strengthen the capacities of current and future leaders among its members; the launch of a call for projects to support the activities of the national platforms; and working with and supporting the activities of Regional Coalitions.

The IFP also continued its advocacy activities around the 2030 Agenda in collaboration with its members. The IFP continues to be very active in the Action for Sustainable Development (A4SD), a civil society global initiative co-funded by the IFP.

2017 has been a landmark for the IFP in its quest to ensure civil society participation in the decision-making processes and mechanisms of global governance through its participation in major events and making its voice heard.

The EU Partnership Forum in June 2017 was a good opportunity to stimulate an open dialogue with the European Commission and to increase collaboration on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. It was also a moment for IFP members to create synergies and share good practices.

The IFP and its members also attended various events during the High-Level Political Forum (HLPF) in July 2017, where the IFP launched its Policy Paper on "[Developing the capacities of civil society for a successful implementation of the 2030 Agenda](#)". The IFP advocated a coordinated global approach to capacity development for civil society, acknowledgment of civil society diversity and the development of strong collaborative partnerships.

The IFP also continued its work to promote an enabling environment for NGOs and defend its members. The IFP denounced the arrest of the Director of the Zambian Council for Social Development (ZCSD), member of the IFP and five other leaders of civil society during an anti-corruption demonstration and called on the assistance of the European Commission, who sent observers to the trial. Similarly, the organisation of the IFP Council in Cambodia was a sign of support for national civil society, which has been increasingly constrained in its activities following the adoption of draconian laws by the current government. On this occasion, the IFP alerted the donors present in Cambodia to the situation of local NGOs.

Despite some positive progress in certain countries, the global situation of civil society remains precarious and its scope for action is steadily shrinking. The creation of the IFP's legal structure and the consolidation of its operational and governance structures, the brand change, as well as the activities of the coming years, will further strengthen the network and the sense of ownership and collaboration amongst its members.

A decisive step towards facing the upcoming challenges for civil society and IFP members is to contribute to strengthening solidarity across civil society globally, building a new narrative for civil society and playing its role. There are among the objectives that the IFP has set itself for 2018 and its upcoming General Assembly.

IFP, A GLOBAL STRUCTURED NETWORK

WHO WE ARE

The IFP gathers 69 National NGO Platforms (NPF) and 7 Regional Coalitions (RC), from Africa, America, Asia, Europe and Pacific. Together we represent 22,000 organisations

The IFP works to strengthen the capacities of civil society through a clear knowledge of the key players, processes, networks and wheels of decision-making to ensure the effective and efficient participation of civil society actors. The IFP also aims to influence public policy at the national, regional and international level as a legitimate catalyst and representative of the voice of NGOs worldwide. It also advocates better resourcing of civil society and the defence of an enabling environment for CSOs.

It focuses on 3 main working areas with a view to addressing power imbalances and triggering genuine social change:

- **Connect** NGO platforms and Regional Coalitions to each other and other stakeholders to build joint actions, learn from each other and fight for an enabling environment for civil society organisations;
- **Support** and develop the capacities of our members for more effective participation in decision-making processes, using the network's collective intelligence and innovative approaches;
- **Influence** public policies affecting development and democracy, together with our members, by engaging in official negotiations, deliberations and public mobilisations at national, regional and international level.

OUR GOVERNANCE

The IFP is currently overseen by 2 key bodies:
The General Assembly and the Council.

IFP GENERAL ASSEMBLY

The General Assembly (GA) is the ultimate decision-making body. The GA is the occasion when members gather to agree our strategy, review past activities and plan for the future. It takes place at least once every three years via face-to-face meetings, and online GAs are convened whenever necessary.

IFP COUNCIL

Renewed by a third every year by the GA, the IFP council is made up of **15 members**, with a regional distribution of seats. Its role is to ensure the implementation of decisions and strategic and political orientations voted upon in the GA; to ensure the coordination of activities and the proper functioning of the executive team; and to report on its activities and management.

COUNCIL MEMBERS

AFRICA

Amacodou Diouf (CONGAD, Senegal)
Council member

Samad Sairally (MACOSS, Mauritius)
Vice-Chair

Clotaire Loubello Nsiloulou (CCOD, Congo Republic)
Council member

ASIA

Harsh Jaitli (VANI, India)
Vice-Chair

Gopal Lamsal (NGO Federation of Nepal, Nepal)
Council member

Minyoung Kim (KCOC, South Korea)
Council member

EUROPE

Rilli Lappalainen (Finnish NGO Platform, Finland)
Vice-Chair

Sarah Mistry (BOND, UK)
Council member



Bénédicte Hermelin (Coordination Sud, France)
Treasurer

LATIN AMERICA
Miguel Santibañez (ACCION, Chile)
Chair

Helmer Velasquez (CONGCOOP, Guatemala)
Council member

Iara Pietricovsky (ABONG, Brazil)
Council member

NORTH AMERICA
Sam A. Worthington (InterAction, United States)
Council member

MAGHREB
Abdelhakim Chafai (Espace Associatif, Morocco)
Council member

PACIFIC
Emele Duituturaga (PIANGO, Pacific)
Council member

The Council is organised around an Executive Committee and 3 thematic committees:

- The **Executive Committee** is composed of a Chair, 3 Vice-Chairs and a Treasurer.
- The **3 thematic committees** are Fundraising, Advocacy & Communication and Membership. Each of these Committees is facilitated by one of the Vice-Chairs.

IFP TEAM

A multicultural and international team

The IFP Secretariat is composed of a multicultural, international executive team of 5 people based in different countries (**France, Ireland, Uruguay & South Africa**) to reflect the network's diversity.

Magda Elena Toma
Director

Rémi Renon
Financial and Administrative Manager

Deirdre de Burca
Advocacy Coordinator

Joyce Soares
Capacity Development & Membership Coordinator

Sanaâ Nadir
Communication Officer

OUR MEMBERS

The IFP's legitimacy is rooted in its national and regional members, which are the driving force of the network. It boosts the capacity of development of NGOs to interact with national governments and authorities while simultaneously providing knowledge, intelligence, support and solidarity across countries and regions.

The IFP also connects its members via working groups, learning and exchange workshops and forums, regional events and gatherings, its General Assembly and a variety of member gatherings on the fringes of international events.

WHAT IS A NATIONAL NGO PLATFORM?

An independent umbrella organization gathering NGO members at a national level and addressing development, humanitarian and environmental issues. NGO platforms' membership is based on shared principles such as democratic governance, transparency and members' participation.

WHAT IS A REGIONAL COALITION?

A Regional Coalition is a network of sub-regional and national NGO platforms in a dedicated region. Our regional members come from Africa, Asia, Europe, Latin America and Pacific.

ACTIVITY REPORT

CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES

Our capacity development approach

Continuous capacity development and learning are prerequisites if civil society is to influence and shape domestic and international public policy. The impact of civil society actors remains very dependent on the capacity of the actors themselves to mobilise their constituency and partners, to work together, to build expertise based on their practices, to learn from local experiences, to engage strategically in interaction with local and national authorities, to develop partnerships with other actors in society, and to develop proposals that draw the attention of their constituency, politicians and media.

IFP's approach to the need for continuous capacity development is impact-oriented, needs-based, uses a peer-to-peer approach, develops leadership, and promotes expertise and innovation, reflection and the exchange of best practice amongst members at national, regional and global levels.

MAIN ACTIVITIES IN 2017

Needs assessment and membership survey

Two surveys were launched in 2017, both in the three IFP languages: Spanish, French and English.

1. The first survey was a needs assessment of the expectations and engagements of IFP members.

Out of the 64 national platforms, 81% (52 platforms) responded.

The majority of members expressed their interest and the need to participate in capacity development activities on: leadership, governance and overall strategy; fundraising, administration, and financial management; advocacy; communication. Various members offered to share their expertise with their peers.

The survey also showed that members consider it important that the IFP plays the roles of facilitator, knowledge hub, disseminator of good practices and enabler of peer exchanges. Members also associate the IFP's work with greater financial sustainability and the development of new partnerships. The results are being used to shape the IFP's capacity development activities and methods of interaction between the IFP and its members.



The IFP's capacity development activities favour peer-to-peer exchange among IFP members through various means. It was, therefore, important to gather information about the expertise and contributions that members need or are willing to share with the entire network.

2. The second survey was a Membership Survey. This was longer and more detailed, gathering data about our members' characteristics: priorities and activities, governance, services to local NGO members, national context, and partnerships. It aims to provide the IFP with accurate and up-to-date information on its members as well as providing a baseline for future evaluations of IFP activities. The collection of this data is currently ongoing.

National partnerships

IFP will partner with and support up to 60 capacity development initiatives/projects by 2020, elaborated and implemented by its national members. The partnerships aim to strengthen the platforms' organisational, operational and/or representational skills and touch on one or several of the priority areas mentioned below:

- a) Leadership and governance of national platforms
- b) Communications and strengthening national platforms' member engagements
- c) Resource mobilisation, financial management and accountability
- d) Advocacy and partnerships

This process aspires to forge partnerships and co-constructed projects, which will raise the visibility and impact of IFP members and the global network. It also allows the IFP to identify best practices and lessons learned by the national platforms and share them with the entire constituency. The final goal of this activity is not only to strengthen the national platforms but also the network as a whole.

The first cycle was launched in October 2017. Two calls were launched simultaneously in French, Spanish and English: a call for projects and a call for volunteers to compose the Peer Support Committee, whose role is to assess the proposals.

22 project proposals were received during the first cycle.

Regional partnerships

The regional level is considered a key building block in the IFP by both supporting the work at national level (in terms of capacity development) and also by providing inputs for the work at regional and international levels (in terms of advocacy).

Therefore, the Regional Coalitions are supported through peer-exchange exercises between Regional Coalitions and are provided with regular and predictable funds to implement advocacy and capacity development activities of their choosing with a focus on their national members.

The regional activities are conducted under the coordination of IFP regional members. Financial partnerships are also ongoing with most of the Regional Coalitions (**ADA** – Asia Development Alliance, **MESA** de Articulacion, **REPAOC** – Réseau des Plates-Formes d'ONG d'Afrique de l'Ouest et du Centre, **REPONGAC** – Réseau des Plate-formes des ONG de d'Afrique Centrale, **PIANGO** – Pacific Islands Association of Non-Government Organisations) for capacity development and advocacy activities.

The regional activities include:

- Capacity development through regional training/workshops for representatives of IFP national members. These events may be organised back-to-back with the Regional Coalitions' General Assemblies. Regional Coalitions can, at their own discretion, work with IFP experts on brainstorming and designing their training sessions/thematic meetings in line with the needs of their national members.

Several activities linked to regional events were organised in 2017 (MESA de Articulation's GA and training on SDGs, ADA regional workshop on 2030 Agenda and the Glocal Advocacy Leadership in Asia (GALAA) Academy training courses in Cambodia & Nepal, workshop with members on development effectiveness back-to-back with the International Civil Society Week in December by PIANGO, REPAOC GA and a two-day workshop with members on the implementation of the recommendations of the REPAOC's self-evaluation facilitated by the IFP).

- Capacity development through regional partnerships with specialised capacity development organisations, which aims to provide the resources so that the Regional Coalitions benefit from external expertise to boost their and their members' capacities in a specific area. Regional Coalitions are currently identifying partnership opportunities or working with consultants on the implementation of their strategies.

- Advocacy: The Regional Coalitions will coordinate regional advocacy activities, with a focus on the SDGs. Other advocacy matters may also be addressed, depending on the priorities per region.

First cycle of the leadership development programme (LDP)

IFP's Leadership Development Programme (LDP) aims to stimulate debate and peer exchange on leadership, social change and the evolving roles of national NGO platforms. It encourages NGO platform leaders and emerging leaders to reflect on their role for social change and bring the debate to their national contexts.

The Community Development Resource Association (CDRA), a South African organisation, facilitates the programme with participatory methods based on the participants' practice and real day-to-day work.

The first cycle of the Leadership Development Programme ran from July 2017 to March 2018.

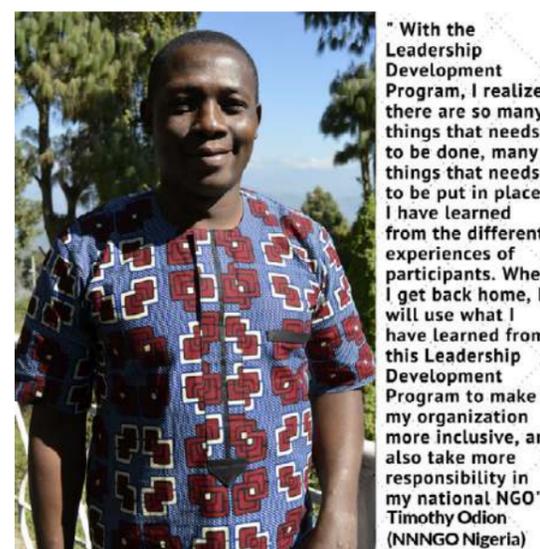
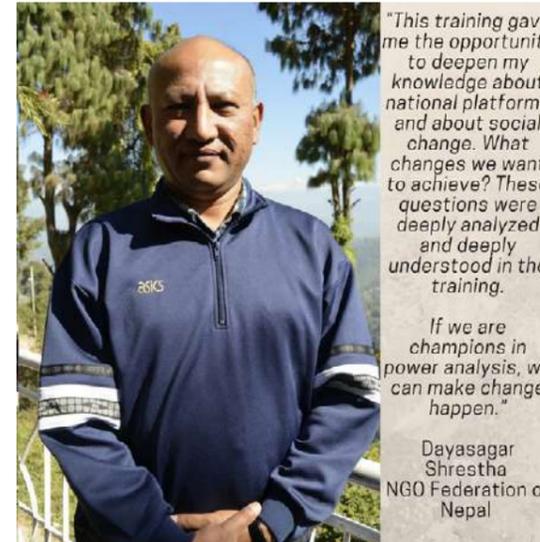
The peer selection committee selected individuals from the following platforms: ZCSD (Zambia), INFID (Indonesia), SLOGA (Slovenia), FoRS (Czech Republic), ADA (Asia-India), UNNGOF (Uganda), NFN (Nepal), LAPAS (Latvia), ABONG (Brazil), CEPS (Seychelles), NNNGO (Nigeria) and the IFP (Uruguay).

Each cycle has a similar structure, combining reading, webinars, research tasks (including the production of a 5-page document), a face-to-face workshop and "back-home" project (to apply/adapt the lessons learned in their own context and discuss future possibilities).

The face-to-face workshop of the first cycle took place on November 18-21 in Dhulikhel (Nepal). Seven LDP participants also decided to join the 5th Glocal Advocacy Leadership in Asia Academy (GALAA), organised by ADA with the aim of strengthening the advocacy capacity of CSOs for defending civic space and human rights through strategic "glocal (global and local)" actions on the SDGs.

The LDP has created a community of practice among IFP members, creating links among the individuals, their platforms and with the IFP. Very positive feedback was received from the participants in the first cycle.

The first cycle took place in English, as a pilot phase. The second cycle will take place in English and Spanish in 2018 and the third cycle will take place in English and French in 2019.



After these 3 cycles, a selected group of participants will gather for a writeshop to start developing a Barefoot Guide focusing on the role of platforms, networks and alliances in the work of social change.

EXAMPLES OF PEER-EXCHANGE WORKSHOPS ORGANISED BY THE IFP

"What kind of governance and leadership do national platforms need in challenging times?" May 2017

An exchange workshop between European platforms was organised by the IFP with the support of CONCORD on 2 June 2017. The workshop was called "What kind of governance and leadership do national platforms need in challenging times?" and had a total of **19 leaders of European National Platforms**, as well as the Director of the Canadian NGO platform. The workshop was very well received by participants.

A strong element of the workshop was sharing experiences, getting to know each other's challenges, and discussing daily issues affecting other national platforms. Regarding areas of improvement, most participants explained they would like to have more time for peer-to-peer sharing experiences, in-depth discussions and an opportunity to exchange with National Platforms from other regions.

"Exchange & learning ADA-IFP workshop around SDG goals 16 & 17" October 2017

An "Exchange & learning ADA-IFP workshop" around practices in the 2030 Agenda (Goals 16 & 17) was organised on October 24 in Phnom Penh by ADA and the IFP, on the fringes of GALAA East Asia and before the IFP's Council meeting. The purpose of the workshop was to address how the SDGs are approached in different countries and at the international level, with two focuses: (1) meaningful, responsive and inclusive participation mechanisms for civil society in decision-making at all levels (national, regional and international) and (2) data-monitoring by civil society of progress linked to indicators, targets and goals, including for CSO involvement in the Voluntary National Review (VNR) processes.

The workshop was attended by **34 IFP and ADA members**, and received an overall very positive evaluation. The participants identified as strong points of the workshop the diversity of participation, the quality of facilitation and exchanges, the multi-country examples, the lessons learned presented by national

members, the level of engagement during working group sessions, and the overall spirit of sharing among all the participants, along with the knowledge, experience and solutions shared among participants. Suggested improvements included extending the time available for group work and for the workshop itself, reducing the theoretical introductory part to give as much space as possible to the parts on sharing experiences, and analysing the link between the different regional and national approaches.

ADVOCACY FOR ECONOMIC, SOCIAL & ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGE

We believe that civil society has a crucial role to play in an interconnected world that is facing increasingly complex and global challenges. Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) work with people around the world in the general interest, so that citizens can exercise their rights and enjoy a better life. Through their active and extensive participation, NGOs can increasingly secure a voice in global governance, within which key development policies affecting the planet and its population are decided and driven. IFP supports National & Regional NGO Platforms to unite the voices of their members and helps them to be recognised as legitimate and credible partners in public negotiations at a global level.

New policy issues and themes are identified by IFP members, who are helped to set up working groups within the IFP around the specific areas of advocacy. The IFP aims to produce policy and advocacy based on national intelligence and analysis work and to support regional platforms to promote and communicate the work undertaken by their national members.

The IFP's advocacy position papers reflect national evidence-based realities to reinforce members' credibility in their interlocution and engagement with national governments, regional and international organisations.

GLOBAL ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS

2030 Agenda working group & webinars

Civil society's role is central to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and national NGO Platforms as primary and legitimate interlocutors of national governments and plays a major role in the operationalisation of the Agenda. The IFP ensures that its entire membership engages effectively in the process.

The mobilisation of NGOs and CSOs to increase public awareness about the 2030 Agenda is becoming an increasingly important issue. The international community also explicitly recognises the importance of building multi-stakeholder partnerships where trade unions, grass-roots organisations, NGOs, the private sector, cooperatives, and the media, can play specific roles.

A Working Group on the 2030 Agenda was created and gathered more than **40 national and regional members**, with a diverse geographical representation. In 2017 the Working Group updated the IFP's strategy on the 2030 Agenda and refined its implementation plan.

The IFP also organises key international actions with other relevant stakeholders linked to the 2030 Agenda to ensure the exchange of information resulting from monitoring and sharing best practices to keep governments accountable to their pledges.

High Level Political Forum 2017: IFP pledges for increased political accountability and effective engagement of civil society

At the HLPF in New York in July 2017, the IFP launched a new policy paper: "[Developing the capacities of civil society for a successful implementation of the 2030 Agenda](#)".

44 governments presented their progress reports during the HLPF on how the 2030 Agenda is being implemented in their countries. The policy paper calls on the UN, its Member States and other major donors to:

- (i) Plan for and develop a coordinated global approach to the capacity development of civil society and other stakeholders, linked to the monitoring and implementation requirements of the 2030 Agenda.
- (ii) Provide support and assistance to global networks such as the IFP and to other regional and national networks to identify the 2030 Agenda capacity development needs of their member organisations.
- (iii) Create a Global Fund to promote the capacity building and development of different stakeholder groups involved in monitoring and implementing the 2030 Agenda, with a focus on civil society. Ensure that the Global Fund is distributed in a way that respects the universality of the Agenda and the diversity of needs expressed by civil society from different regions.

EU Partnership Forum 2017: a constructive dialogue between the IFP network and Civil society stakeholders

Held in Brussels on 6 and 7 July 2017, this event brought together approximately 500 civil society organisations, local authorities and many stakeholders such as development and human rights actors, European institutions and Member States. It aimed to generate constructive dialogue and to gather feedback on best practices to help the EU institutions further develop their partnerships.

For the IFP and its members, the EU Partnership Forum was a valuable opportunity to promote our unique perspective as a global network of National Platforms and Regional Coalitions, and to engage in advocacy related to our 2030 Agenda priorities. The IFP hosted a two-hour panel discussion on the topic of "*Consensus, CSOs, Partnerships and Means of Implementation*". Miguel Santibañez (IFP Chair) and Harsh Jaitli (IFP Vice-Chair) were members of the panel, which was moderated by Deirdre de Burca, the IFP's Advocacy Coordinator.

The purpose of the IFP-hosted panel discussion was to **(i)** Explore how new models of structured dialogue and cross-sectoral partnerships can enhance the ability of civil society organisations to fully play their role as development actors in their own right **(ii)** To identify how the new EU Development Consensus and EU Roadmaps will support the meaningful inclusion and participation of civil society in the development processes **(iii)** To discuss how key 2030 Agenda "Means of Implementation", including in particular capacity development and financing for development, can support civil society in delivering on the Agenda.

A4SD: a powerful coalition to tackle the key challenges of the 2030 Agenda

This new 2030 Agenda framework is universal and overarching. It has quickly begun to shape development policies and influence international cooperation. The Agenda is largely implemented at national level so the strong focus of the IFP on the national level is even more crucial.

Civil society's role is central to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and national NGO platforms, as primary and legitimate interlocutors of national governments, play a major role in the operationalization of the Agenda. The IFP ensures that its entire membership engages effectively in the process.

After having been one of the influential CSO actors in contributing to the development of this Agenda, the IFP intends to remain a key player in keeping governments accountable and to be a major actor in its implementation.

For this reason, the IFP, with the Climate Action Network (CAN), CIVICUS and the Global Campaign Against Poverty (GCAP) and numerous other CSOs have shaped a new global civil society network – Action for Sustainable Development (A4SD).

REGIONAL ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS

ADA, Asia

The 5th Glocal Advocacy Leadership in Asia (GALA) Academy – East and South Asia is a joint initiative by the Asia Development Alliance (ADA) and Asia Democracy Network (ADN) with the aim of strengthening the advocacy capacity of CSOs for defending and promoting civic and democratic space and human rights through strategic "glocal (global and local)" actions on the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, known as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

It was organised in Phnom Penh, Cambodia (East and central Asia) on 18-23 October and Pokhara (for South Asia) on 12-16 November 2017 in partnership with the International Forum of National NGO Platforms (IFP), Transparency, Accountability and Participation (TAP) Network and Asia Partnership for Sustainable Development (APSD) with the Cooperation Committee for Cambodia (CCC) and NGO Federation of Nepal as a local host.

The workshop helped CSOs in East, Central and South Asia to learn about the SDGs and how to engage with governments and other stakeholders for the implementation of SDGs, including monitoring and coalition-building among CSOs across the sectors focused on the processes around the 2030 Agenda, such as the Voluntary National Reviews and the production of shadow reports.

REPONGAC, Central Africa

REPONGAC held national workshops on SDG follow-up in 5 countries of Central Africa.

In 2017, REPONGAC participated in the Africa Regional Forum on Sustainable Development as an observer. Its aim was, to gather information disseminated through 5 workshops in 5 countries in Central Africa: Congo, Gabon, Democratic Republic of Congo, São Tomé and Príncipe, and Chad.

At the regional level, the two regional economic communities recognise REPOGAC as the representative of civil society in Central Africa, a member of the steering committee of CEMAC's Program of Support to Trade and Economic Integration (PACIE), and as a member of the steering committee of the Institutional Capacity Building Support Project of ECCAS (PARCI-CEEAC) since November 2017.

REPAOC, Western Africa

In 2017, REPAOC participated in three Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) events with workshops advocating the effective implementation of ECOWAS policies and working for the eradication of hunger in the region – one of REPAOC's strategic priorities.

In July 2017, REPAOC also participated in the Partnership Forum in Brussels, the G7+ meeting in Lisbon, where REPAOC organised a fringe event with representatives of Afghanistan, Timor-Leste, Sierra Leone, CAR, Burundi, Chad, Guinea Conakry, Liberia, São Tomé-Príncipe, Solomon Islands and Comoros. Four of these were high-level invitees (ministry level), and the event focused on the weakness of the national justice system in ECOWAS Member States and the lack of civil society resources for monitoring and information-sharing.

PIANGO, Pacific

PIANGO held two workshops for Pacific CSOs to raise awareness of the SDGs and shares the experience of Samoa's civil society in the follow-up of the VNR.

During the World Ocean Summit (SDG 14) in New York on 5-9 June 2017, PIANGO organised a fringe event called Voices from the Blue Frontier: Ocean Governance between Blue Economy & Human Rights, in an effort to highlight the concerns of Pacific communities about seabed mining.

By April 2017, PIANGO had produced 7 position papers or primers, boosting PIANGO's efforts to not only raise awareness of key policy advocacy issues, but also to facilitate a contextualisation of policy advocacy across the Pacific CSO sector. 2017 saw a tremendous surge in PIANGO's capacity to drive regional policy discourse and affect change at the regional level, including media statements made from and at PIANGO-facilitated events and meetings.

MESA, Latin America

MESA organised a workshop on Agenda 2030 to collectively build a proposal for a regional civil society participation mechanism.

MESA's GA was organised on the sidelines of the first meeting of the Latin American Regional Forum for Sustainable Development (hosted by ECLAC). The 2030 Agenda workshop produced a joint statement by MESA members, highlighting key elements for the implementation of the Agenda in the region and proposing a structure for the functioning of the regional participation mechanism within the framework of the ECLAC Regional Forum on Sustainable Development (RFSD). This declaration was based on the mechanism currently in place in UNESCAP and adapted by MESA's steering committee. This has strengthened MESA's positioning in the regional context, both within civil society and as a regional civil society interlocutor of ECLAC and the Member States.

COMMUNICATION

IFP COMMUNICATION ASSESSMENT

The IFP carried out a communication assessment with its members in April 2017. Its main recommendations were:

- Strengthen the IFP's institutional visibility in order to become a well-known and credible actor
- The IFP's role is to spread members' messages while connecting them
- Change the current logo and name to make it more impactful, understandable, clear, and memorable and make it easier to identify the IFP's mission at a glance
- Create a dedicated communication network with the support of members' communication officers to better address member's needs
- Improve internal communication between the IFP and its members (both directions)
- Develop a professional website with enhanced and strategic contents to gain visibility for the IFP and its members
- Dynamise the social media networks (Facebook/ Twitter) and create interaction with IFP members

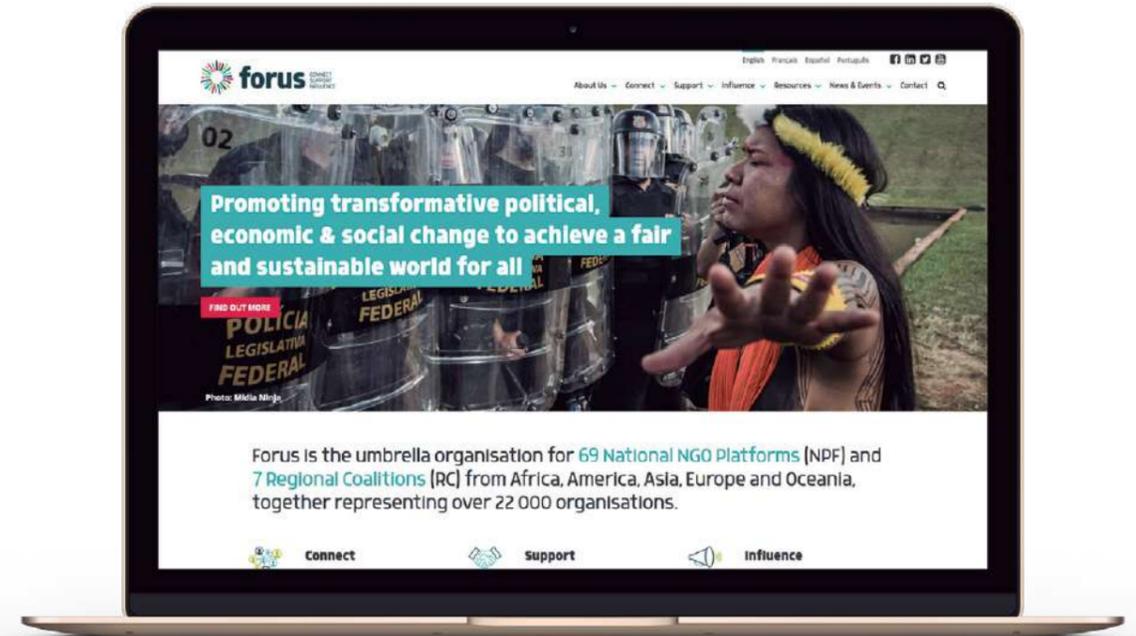
NEW INSTITUTIONAL TOOLS & MATERIALS

Leaflet

An institutional brochure has been developed to provide a tool for presenting the network. It will be distributed to potential stakeholders and new members.

IFP breaking news and IFP at-a-glance templates

Based on the feedback from the assessment, we have created new tools for communicating with members. The idea was to create a better template for sending



information than classic emails and to gather all the information in one template, thus avoiding the need for several emails:

IFP Breaking news (Mailchimp template) to release specific and one-shot information.

IFP at a glance (Mailchimp template) to release information like news/toolkits/publications/ campaigns.

A NEW IDENTITY FOR THE IFP

Following the results of the communication assessment (carried out in April 2017), which asked IFP members to give their general feedback on communication and the discussions with the Executive Comitee and the Council, work began with a copywriter to define a new identity. In late October 2017 in Cambodia, the Council decided to submit the new proposed name for the GA's approval. In an online vote, the GA approved the IFP-FIP's new name – Forus – with 97% of votes being cast in favour of this option.

The new name had to reflect the IFP's vision, cultural background and respect for language diversity. Work on the brand change process was initiated with a communication agency (James Eccleston). The key words that the new brand has to reflect are: Impact, Inclusive, Diverse, Genuine, Empowering, Amplifying. The new identity aims to better reflect the purpose

and ambition of the network and its members. The new strapline "Connect Support Influence" describes the key aims and activities of the network.

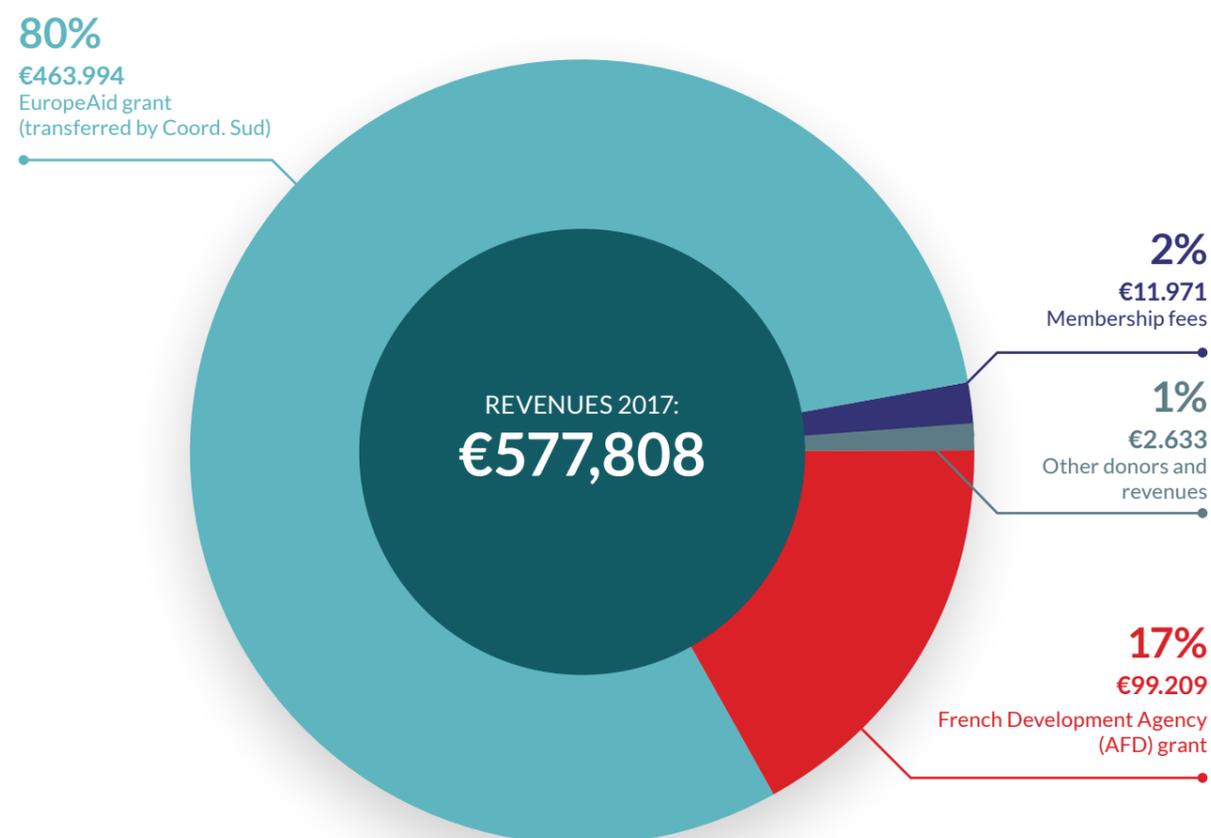
ADVISORY GROUP

The Advisory Group was launched within the IFP network in early 2017 to deal with communication issues involving members' communication officers/managers. It has been working on a number of topics, including analysing the communication strategy, communication tools and the newsletter. The work continues, particularly on the new identity of the IFP.

WEBSITE & SOCIAL MEDIA

The change of identity made it necessary to rethink the design and content of the website and develop an editorial strategy for social networks (ongoing projects).

FINANCIAL REPORT



INCOME STATEMENT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2017

Revenues: €577,808

The IFP's activities in 2017 were mostly financed by public grants: EuropeAid grant (€463,994) transferred by IFP's French member Coordination Sud (acting as fiscal agent) and the grant awarded by the French Development Agency, of which €99,209 was allocated for financing activities in 2017.

The IFP collected membership fees for the first time in 2017. Membership fees paid or committed until 31 January 2018 are recorded in the statement for the year 2017 (total: €11,971).

Expenditures: €571,145

The main expenditure items are HR costs (€195,017) and subgrants transferred to members (€156,808 transferred to 5 Regional Coalitions in 2017). Meeting costs are mainly related to the Council meetings.

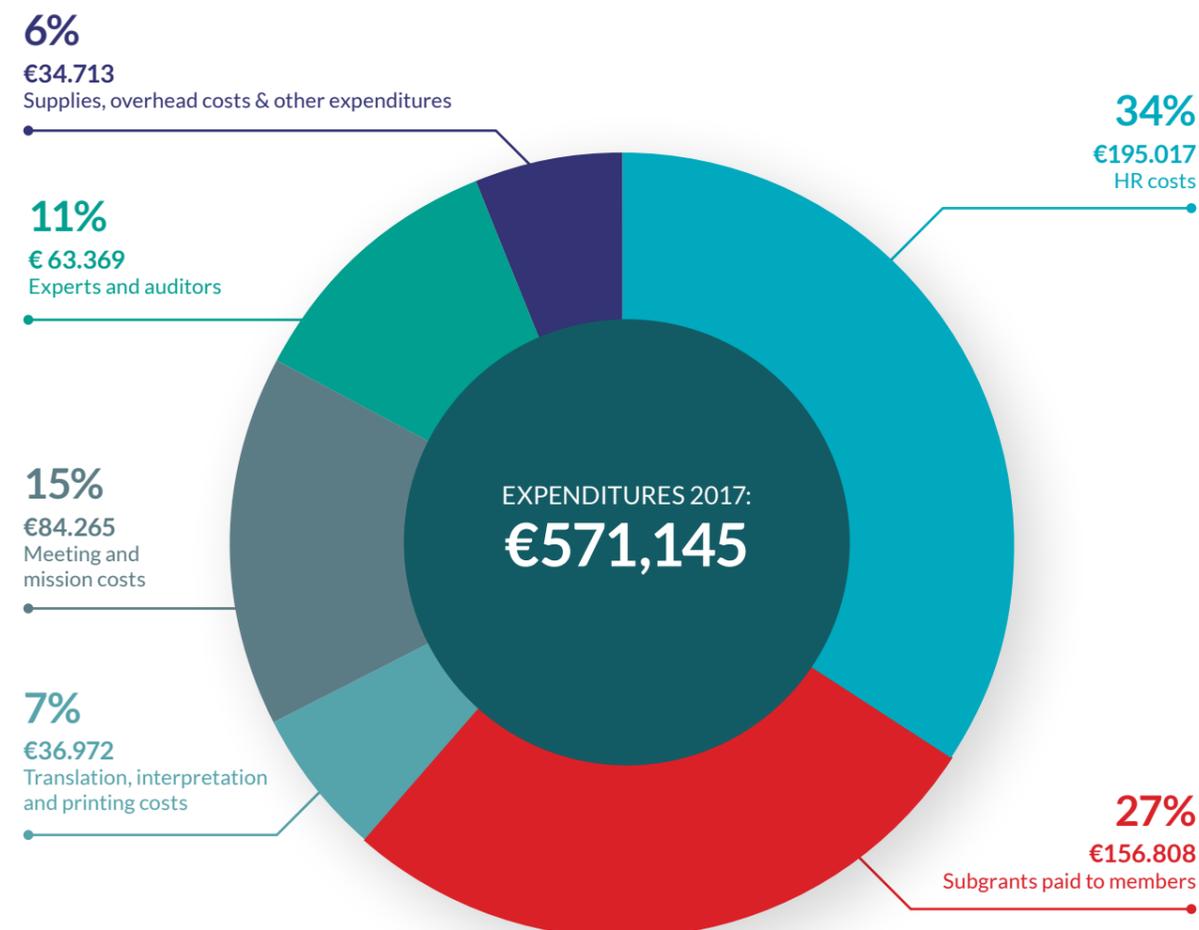
Result:

The slightly positive result (+ €6,664) of the 2017 financial year relates to unrestricted revenues (such as membership fees) and savings with respect to overhead costs at the secretariat level.

BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2017

Assets: The main feature of the balance sheet is the significant level of cash available as at 31 December 2017 related to unspent grants (see below). Accounts receivable are membership fees committed but not paid at the date of closing the accounts. Prepaid expenses are related to current service contracts. The fixed assets are equipment (furniture, computers) purchased in 2017 for the headquarters and staff.

Liabilities: The main liabilities are unspent grants (French Development Agency and European Commission). The other current liabilities – Accounts payable (suppliers) and Accrued social contributions and taxes (relating to staff) - remain limited.



Assets	Total / 31 Dec 2017
Current assets	
Cash	€483.595
Accounts receivable	€1.419
Asset accruals	
Prepaid expenses	€8.404
Fixed assets	
Property and equipment	€7.108
[Less accumulated depreciation]	-€1.399
TOTAL ASSETS	€499.128

Liabilities	Total / 31 Dec 2017
Current liabilities	
Accounts payable	€13.834
Accrued social contributions and taxes	€34.934
Balance of subgrants to be paid to IFP partners and of the UE grant transferred to IFP by Coord. Sud	€183.895
Public grants: balance of 1st payments	€255.634
Funds, capital, equity	
Investment grant	€4.168
Result of the fiscal year	€6.664
TOTAL LIABILITIES	€499.128

PARTNERS & ALLIANCES

DONORS

The IFP has long standing political and financial partnerships with the European Commission (EuropeAid) and the French Development Agency (AFD).

EU Framework Partnership Agreement:

IFP signed a Framework Partnership Agreement for 5 years with the European Commission. This political and financial partnership aims to:

- Strengthen the institutional, organisational, and operational capacities of the IFP;
- Position the IFP as an influential international player and a model for the capacity development of NGOs at national and global level;
- Strengthen advocacy at national, regional, and international levels, including the monitoring and implementation of the objectives of the 2030 Agenda. https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/index_en.htm

French Development Agency:

The French Development Agency has supported the IFP since the beginning. An ongoing 3-year partnership aims to support the network and its members to promote civil society actions for a positive impact on development policies. <https://www.afd.fr/fr>

CSO PEERS

Action for Sustainable Development (A4SD)

Action for Sustainable Development (A4SD) aims to build a strong and inclusive global platform to connect and support civil society activities related to sustainable development at all levels. Through enhanced analysis, information-sharing and collaborative strategy development, A4SD seeks to strengthen civil society engagement at all stages and levels of the implementation of the global agendas (2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development and Paris Climate Agreement).

In 2017, A4SD's membership consisted of around 848 organisations and individuals in 111 countries, with 82% of members based in the Global South.

The IFP plays a major role in A4SD alongside 3 other international networks (CIVICUS – the World Alliance for Citizen Participation, GCAP – the Global Call to Action on Poverty & CAN I – Climate Action Network International) co-facilitators of the platform, as part of



EU partnership Forum 2017

the Coordination Team which provides logistical and programmatic support. The IFP also has a seat in the Facilitation Group, A4SD's governance body.

The IFP and A4SD work closely on joint advocacy activities at global level but also on developing tools for capacity development and facilitating peer exchange and learning sessions between CSOs, especially on the process of the Voluntary National Reviews on 2030 Agenda. <https://action4sd.org/>

Community Development Resource Association (CDRA)

Currently, the IFP has a partnership with the Community Development Resource Association (CDRA) for the facilitation of the Leadership

Development Programme. CDRA is an organisation with over 30 years of experience in supporting civil society organisations and social practitioners working in social change and transformation through exploring, inquiring into, practising and promoting organisational and community development practices that promote progressive social change and transformation.

Its purpose is to provide organisation development support services to civil society formations that are striving to be more effective in their social purpose. In practical methodological terms, CDRA uses a variety of processes during the programme, like free writing, levels of listening, asking better questions, World Café, games and simulations, small group work, large group dialogue, daily review groups, artistic exercises, etc. <http://www.cdra.org.za>

Worldwide Initiatives for Grantmaker Support (WINGS)

The Worldwide Initiatives for Grantmaker Support (WINGS) is a network of over 100 philanthropic associations and support organisations in 40 countries around the world whose purpose is to strengthen, promote and provide leadership on the development of philanthropy and social investment. Together WINGS members and network participants represent over 100,000 philanthropic entities from all regions, mobilising billions of dollars.

In a concerted effort to address pressing issues and develop a global culture of giving and solidarity, representatives of the IFP, CIVICUS and WINGS have signed a [joint declaration calling for a More Enabling Environment for Philanthropy and Civil Society](#).

including NGOs. The three networks also stress the importance of greater articulation of initiatives between existing networks and other key actors involved, and the importance of ensuring regular communication and collaboration amongst them.

In addition, IFP and WINGS are collecting successful and innovative initiatives on the promotion of a more enabling environment for philanthropy and civil society and aim to publish a report in 2018.
<http://www.wingsweb.org>

HIGHLIGHTS 2015/2016

2015

2015 was a landmark year for the strengthening of the global network, particularly with the adoption of its 2016-2020 Strategy and the decision taken by the General Assembly in March 2015 to set itself up as an institution by creating a legal structure in France. One of its key aims in this respect was to play a pioneering role in the capacity building of NGO Platforms and the monitoring and implementation of the 2030 Agenda. The evolution of the IFP has fuelled its desire to step up with a view to heightening its impact and increasing its legitimacy.

IFP's overall objective is to influence public policy at national, regional and international level as a legitimate catalyst and representative of the voice of NGOs worldwide. This is the mandate given to the network by its members, which is reinforced by their decision to create a legal structure for the IFP, based in France. The legal empowerment of the IFP demonstrates its maturity, both in terms of resource management and governance.

The meeting of the IFP Council in December 2015 served to implement the decisions of the General Assembly. A Constituent Assembly was held on the occasion to formalise the decision to create the IFP association, adopt the new articles of incorporation, and elect the governance of the IFP. The composition of the Council was confirmed and, for the first time, an Executive Committee was elected with a mandate of two years (renewable). These historic decisions have strengthened the IFP's governance and provide the tools to improve its effectiveness.

2015 was also the year when the IFP revised its strategy on members' capacity development. It was also the year when the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development was adopted by the Member States of the United Nations, after several years of negotiations

in which the IFP, its members and partners were closely involved and managed to have a major influence.

2016

2016 was the first year of implementation of the new, ambitious 2016-2020 strategy.

The IFP Secretariat began recruiting its international, multicultural and decentralised team. The governance bodies were also busy preparing the launch of the various activities and communication with members was increased.

The IFP started establishing itself as a strong international civil society player, asserting strategic and long-term investment in capacity building with the ambition of spreading to thousands of individual CSOs. Peer learning and dissemination of best practices are major assets that this international network can offer.

With regard to the IFP's objective to promote the positions of members and their participation in discussions with governments, international organisations and other stakeholders, since 2016 at the international level, the work has focused more specifically on the monitoring and implementation of the 2030 Agenda. To this end, a working group has been created to map the needs and expectations of members on the 2030 Agenda, strengthen their advocacy capacity as appropriate, and guide the IFP in its positions. Based on analysis carried out by IFP members, the group has produced a global position paper called, "The key building blocks of a successful implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals."

It is important to note the IFP's smart approach in avoiding redundant efforts and encouraging effectiveness and combining experiences among its members, their target groups, and across the field. The IFP has strong relationships with other CSO networks and platforms as well as the potential to develop strategic partnerships with other key players.

These three specific objectives are closely intertwined and mainly aim to position the IFP as an essential player because it is legitimate and representative of NGO voices. The creation of the IFP's legal structure in 2016 and the consolidation of its operational and governance structures, as well as the preparation of several activities, has strengthened the network further, along with its members' sense of ownership and belonging.

We're rebranding

The International Forum of National NGO Platforms, widely known as IFP-FIP, is undergoing a rebranding exercise and will be called Forus starting in September 2018. The new name and branding aims to better reflect the purpose and ambition of the network and its members.

The new strapline "Connect Support Influence" describes the key aims and activities of the network.



Becomes





 www.ifp-fip.org

 contact@ifp-fip.org

 @IFP_FIP

 **IFP - International Forum of
National NGO Platforms**

The International Forum of National NGO Platforms (IFP) is a member-led network of 69 National NGO Platforms and 7 Regional Coalitions from all continents representing over 22,000 NGOs active locally and internationally on development, human rights and environmental issues.

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