



forus CONNECT
SUPPORT
INFLUENCE

2020

ANNUAL REPORT

FORUS



FOREWORD

RAISING CIVIL SOCIETY VOICES IN A WORLD IN TRANSITION

BY FORUS CHAIR - IARA PIETRICOVSKY

2020 has been a challenging year for civil society as a whole. We have witnessed new challenges and barriers, our voices have been curtailed but we also built new alliances, transforming the way we work and interact, demonstrating creativity in order to tackle a global crisis.

In an increasingly digitalized world, as public engagement is declining and transforming, and threats to democracy continue to flourish, a more coordinated, synergistic civil society is arising.

Forus' ability to link civil society action from the local to the global level, to come together and join forces across its diversity, has been unique. As a global network, Forus brings together thousands of organizations and networks, represented through a nodal ecosystem of national and regional platforms. Thus, even in times where society is polarized between fear and solidarity, our collective engagement is to propose solutions and pathways towards a new paradigm that holds the needs of people as its guiding light.

A new paradigm involves fighting against inequalities and threats to fundamental rights and taking action like Forus and many civil society organisations did during the Finance in Common Summit in November 2020, to call on public development banks to devote their considerable financial resources and influence towards building a just, equitable, inclusive and sustainable future for all.

More than ever, alongside with our members from all over the world, we coped with the pandemic's challenges, learning in the process but always claiming our belonging to the big family of civil society, collaborating & advocating together to build the world we want. Besides the fight for equality and human rights, we are committed to radicalizing democracy by reaffirming its root values. Democracy is widely attacked nowadays, yet it is so necessary for all voices to be heard and for ensuring the right to participate in all levels of decisions that will define the present and future of all. It is a premise to build a world of justice, equity and equality.



2020

None of the activities presented in this year's report would have been possible without the ongoing support and belief in our work from our members, allies and donors, including secretariat staff, board and friends.

This is the spirit which will permeate Forus' ambition for the coming years. How to best connect and collaborate for change, looking to the future with hope and recognizing that changes need to be made at all levels of society, including within Forus and its members.

The advances made in 2020 were both internal and external, engaging our members in a new impactful - yet sometimes challenging - way. Let's keep on building a more enabling environment for civil society, where no one is left behind.



Forus, a global network dedicated to connecting and supporting civil society



Our work is organized around three strategic pillars of action: **Connect** - **Support** - **Influence**. We work together, linking on-the-ground realities to global agendas, strengthening a vibrant network of effective and influential Regional Coalitions and National Platforms. We are convinced that alliance-building and collaboration are determining factors to position civil society as a key actor of governance at all levels. In 2020, with the Covid-19 pandemic, the imperative for civil society action has been put into stark light, as have the need to protect civic space, to promote human rights, and to build an inclusive and sustainable world for all.

OUR MISSION

A world-wide partnership aiming at having a positive impact on poverty eradication, reduction of inequalities, and promotion of social justice and peace around the world.

OUR VISION

Together as a global network of civil society national platforms and regional coalitions, Forus links diverse community aspirations to global actions around a common agenda for inclusive and sustainable societies and brings a major collective contribution to Development, Peace, Democracy and Justice.

OUR MEMBERS

Our members collectively represent over 22,000 organizations including national NGOs, international NGOs and CSOs working on development. They create a space for collective action around shared interests, purposes and values. Our members are at the heart of Forus. They include 68 National platforms and 7 Regional Coalitions. The Regional Coalitions are present in Asia, the Pacific region, Southern, Western and Central Africa, Latin America, and Europe.

The [68 national platforms members of Forus](#) include:

- 26 from **Africa**
- 15 from **Europe**
- 11 from **Latin America**
- 9 from **Asia**
- 4 from **the Pacific**
- 2 from **North America**
- 1 from **North Africa/Middle East**



VOICES FROM THE NETWORK

"Forus and its membership are helping to shape a new world, reduce and eradicate poverty in disadvantaged communities."

Alhagi S. Cham - TANGO - Gambia

OUR GOVERNANCE

Our structure is designed to allow Forus to have strong leadership by members, and for decision-making to be emerging from members according to their needs and priorities. We ensure that everyone has the opportunity to contribute to Forus' governance, with a geographical and gender balance.

In 2020, Forus' governance stayed engaged in steering the network despite the challenges brought by the pandemic. A leadership transition also took place when Magda Toma, who had led Forus' work for over 8 years, moved on to new endeavors.

In April 2020, a new Director, Sarah Strack, took over from Magda Toma, bringing extensive experience in managing global alliances and networks, in advocacy and capacity-development, and in facilitating the co-creation of strategies and campaigns through genuine collaboration and impactful partnerships.

Forus' Executive Committee (ExCom) met on average once a month to discuss and decide on key matters and provided continuous guidance to the Secretariat throughout their mandate.

Forus' Council also continued to meet regularly bringing together CSO leaders from 15 countries to steer the network and inform strategic decision-making.

While the planned face-to-face General Assembly of October 2020 was cancelled due to the COVID-19, a weeklong Forus Virtual Forum was organized, for members and allies to discuss and exchange on challenges and opportunities for civil society and the Forus community. Learn more about our governance [here](#).

Forus' [new 2021-2025 Strategy](#), developed through a collaborative and consultative process involving Forus members and partners, was unveiled. The strategy focuses on the necessity for global solidarity to offer hope, joint solutions, and to build a new future grounded in a shared conviction that every life matters, regardless of age, gender, nationality, ethnic background, sexual orientation, migrant status or any other identity marker. It reaffirms the fundamental role of civil society and sets out a positive agenda, with the goal of promoting inclusive and sustainable societies.

MEET OUR GOVERNANCE



OUR TEAM

The partially decentralized Secretariat consists of dedicated individuals bringing the voices of Forus members forward. Forus' Secretariat relies on a multicultural, international executive team of 8 people & several interns, with members based in different countries.



Sarah Strack
Director



Rémi Renon
Financial and Administrative
Manager



Deirdre de Burca
Advocacy coordinator



Joyce Soares
Capacity Development &
Membership Coordinator



Sanaâ Nadir
Communication officer



Bibbi Abruzzini
PR & Campaigns



Sarah Hénon
Development Manager



Yohan Cambet
Communications Intern



Arturo Cortés Barbabosa
Project Assistant



Adélaïde Marre
Operational Support Intern



Moyra Oblitas
Advocacy Intern



Viviana Marques
Capacity Development &
Membership Intern

MEET THE TEAM



FORUS

**2020
HIGHLIGHTS**





2020 HIGHLIGHTS

#SUPPORT

National projects: partnering to strengthen capacities

In 2020, Forus has partnered with and supported its national members for 36 capacity development projects. In addition, a dedicated section on our website called Supporting our national members has been created to showcase the projects of the first four cycles, with a total support to 49 members. In this new section, all the projects are available, based on their areas of implementation, giving more visibility to the member-led activities & enabling synergies to emerge through collective learning.

#INFLUENCE

Promoting an Enabling Environment for civil society

Forus commissioned a scoping study on international and national experiences to identify recommendations on how national and regional coalitions, and Forus itself, can best promote a CSO enabling environment.

READ THE REPORT





#CONNECT

Forus virtual Forum (22-28 October): shaping a positive agenda for civil society

Forus held in October 2020 a virtual forum gathering members and allies to discuss and exchange on several topics ranging from civic space, the power of networks, how to shape a positive agenda for civil society organisations, safeguarding, accountability, financing for development, the SDGs, enabling environment and organizational strengthening.

WATCH THE VIDEOS



#INFLUENCE

Finance in Common Summit: engaging to make people's rights prevail

In 2020, Forus developed its work on Financing for sustainable development through the creation of a new working group and through co-facilitating a wide coalition of CSOs working in development in the lead-up to the first-ever global summit of Public Development Banks (PDBs) called Finance in Common, and which took place in November 2020. Forus collaborated with a large number of civil society actors from the climate, environment, gender justice and Human Rights community. This led to a joint CSO declaration on the summit. Forus' Chair Iara Pietricovsky moreover represented a cross-section of civil society during the High-Level panel of the summit, alongside French President Emmanuel Macron and other high-level leaders from governments and multilateral organisations.



#SUPPORT

Dealing With Disasters (DRR) Toolkit and microsite

From the COVID-19 pandemic to conflicts and climate emergencies, Forus worked with members and allies to build resilient communities and respond to emergencies. In 2019 we started a project to strengthen the capacities of national NGO platforms in crisis and post-emergency situations with the support of the Fondation de France. Our collaboration with the Global Network of Civil Society Organizations for Disaster Reduction (GNDR), Save the Children Switzerland and Inventing Futures resulted in a toolkit and microsite launched in December 2020, available in English, French and Spanish with case studies from various Forus members dealing with disasters - from earthquakes in Nepal to military conflicts in Mali and the peace process in Colombia.

#INFLUENCE

#Unmute campaign: ensuring meaningful civil society participation in the 2020 Virtual HLPF

In July 2020, Forus and its members launched their #UNmute campaign on social media, calling for a robust virtual civil society participation, during and after the United Nations High-Level Political Forum (HLPF). Due to COVID-19, most of the participation to the Forum has been virtual, with the risk of civil society being "muted" becoming high. In a joint letter, Forus & other international CSOs urged the UN and its Member States to take measures to ensure inclusive modalities to facilitate the extensive virtual participation of Civil Society. Forus also launched 2 new reports on Civil Society and its role in the effective implementation of the SDGs.



#CONNECT

A Space For Us podcast : making Forus' members voices heard

Forus launched in September 2020 a podcast entitled "A Space for Us", which features over 30 activists, Human Rights Defenders and civil society leaders from around the globe. From Bolivia to Nepal, this collaborative process was an opportunity to discuss several issues important to civil society in national/regional contexts - from gender and civic space to climate justice, development policies and the role of the youth. Other Forus podcast series will follow in 2021, focusing on digitalisation, an enabling environment for civil society and disaster risk reduction.

[LISTEN HERE](#)



2020 RESOURCES

Forus' resources (publications, toolkits, workshops, reports) are available to CSOs and global practitioners.

We believe in collaboration and peer learning, as the dissemination of information and tools supporting evidenced-based advocacy and capacity development generates genuine solidarity among CSOs and promotes the emergence of international synergies.

Find below a focus on our latest publications and toolkits:

- [Progressing National SDGs Implementation \(Fourth Edition\)](#) (Available in English, February 2020)
- [Localisation of Aid, Lessons from partnerships between French NGOs and Local actors](#) (Coordination Sud) (available in English and French, March 2020)
- [Goal 17 report: Are governments delivering on the Capacity Development of Civil Society to ensure a successful implementation of the 2030 Agenda?](#) (Available in English, French and Spanish, July 2020)
- [Realizing the potential of Goal 16 of the 2030 Agenda to promote and protect Civic Space](#) (Available in English, July 2020)
- [Transformative action to realize the 2030 Agenda through effective coalitions](#) (Available in English and French, September 2020)
- [Exploring new funding approaches for civil society](#) (Available in English, French and Spanish, November 2020)
- [The Big Changes needed in Financing for Sustainable development](#) (Available in English and French, November 2020)
- [A Scoping Study of National NGO Platforms' Experiences in Promoting an Enabling Environment](#) (Available in English and French, December 2020)
- [Mapping innovation thinking, culture, and practices among Forus members](#) (Available in English, French, Spanish and Portuguese, December 2020)

DISCOVER ALL



FORUS

**2020
ENGAGEMENT**



IMPACT BY THE NUMBERS

49

Webinars organised
by our capacity
development and
advocacy teams

990

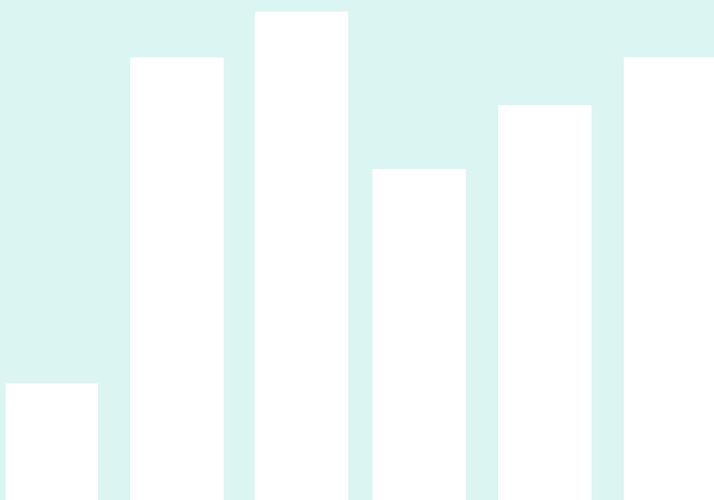
People who
participated to
our online events
in 2020

WEBSITE VISITS

2019

+60%

2020



SOCIAL MEDIA INSIGHTS

25-45
YEARS OLD

**FORUS MAIN AUDIENCE
ON FACEBOOK**

23.2K
TWEET
IMPRESSIONS

**IN THE MONTH OF
NOVEMBER DURING
THE FINANCE IN
COMMON SUMMIT**

70+

**OUR NEWSLETTER
REACHED PEOPLE IN
70+ COUNTRIES IN 4
LANGUAGES**



**NEW INSTAGRAM
PAGE!** 

FORUS

CONNECT
SUPPORT
INFLUENCE





CONNECT

WE MULTIPLY TRANSFORMATIVE INTERCONNECTIONS AMONG FORUS MEMBERS AND WITH OTHER CIVIL SOCIETY ACTORS IN ORDER TO COLLECTIVELY ACHIEVE A GREATER IMPACT.

Forus campaigns - In 2020 Forus developed several participative and multimedia campaigns with members and allies. From the #Unmute campaign on civic space, to a #FutureinCommon on the occasion of the Finance in Common summit, we are developing storytelling initiatives to share the voices of the network.

FIND ALL CAMPAIGNS HERE

The network has also improved its social media presence through posting videos and information of webinars on [YouTube](#) as well as creating an [Instagram](#) page. We also continued to share the actions of the network on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [LinkedIn](#).

In the face of the pandemic, our network and partners joined forces during an online meeting aimed at reflecting on the future of civil society organisations in the light of coronavirus (June 17th 2020).

In 2020, we put a particular effort in building partnerships with independent media from across the globe. From sharing the stories of activists fighting against racism in France, to the voices of civil society in Paraguay and Peru calling for climate justice, we have developed partnerships with several media platforms - from Cafebabel to IPS news, the Nepali Times and Cronistas Latinoamericanos.

FORUS IN THE MEDIA





SUPPORT

WE STRENGTHEN THE CAPACITIES OF OUR MEMBERS TO REPRESENT NGOS AND CONVENE DIVERSE CIVIL SOCIETY ACTORS. WE USE THE NETWORK'S COLLECTIVE INTELLIGENCE AND INNOVATIVE APPROACHES THROUGH PEER-TO-PEER PROCESSES INCLUDING PEER LEARNING AND KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE, POOLING RESOURCES IN A DYNAMIC AND MULTILINGUAL ENVIRONMENT. FOCUS AREAS OF WORK AND TOOLS ARE DRIVEN BY MEMBERS' NEEDS AND EXPECTATIONS.

Forus' approach to strengthening national NGO platforms takes multiple forms, including the creation of peer exchanges spaces, toolkits, the Leadership Development Program and webinars. All activities have a horizontal approach involving the members, team and governance. Forus also supports members with funds to implement initiatives led and implemented by our members at national and regional levels. These capacity development projects are adapted to members' needs and specific contexts, building the collective knowledge of the network.

Support to national members:

Forus' capacity-development support includes providing financial support to its national members, recognising the wide differences in resources between CSOs. This contributes to the wider goal of learning for and from Forus members. These capacity-development projects lead to the identification of good practices in the network, raise the visibility and impact of members and foster closer links among Forus members. Several evaluations have shown that the support to these projects was seen as core to Forus' strategy to address members' needs, allowing for flexibility and autonomy for the national members to adapt the projects according to their respective contexts.



A few examples of the projects carried out by Forus' members include:

- **EENG**D (Argentina) advocacy work consisted in the elaboration of policy proposals and the creation of spaces conducive for civil society participation in public processes. Throughout the project, the platform also sought to renovate its visual identity, thereby giving more visibility to its members' activities.
- **NFN** (Nepal) organized accountability dialogues at both national and provincial levels on Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) policies and processes. More specifically, NFN organized six conferences with local authorities, which provided a platform for dialogue between CSOs and government authorities.
- **SPONG** (Burkina Faso) saw its governance strengthened, as well as its horizontal communication with members. The strengthening of two working groups, including one on Agriculture, Environment and Food & Nutritional Security, led to the development of tools aimed at harmonizing the work of all the platforms' working groups.
- **NNNGO** (Nigeria) developed a non-profit assessment tool which culminated in the dissemination of the first-ever sector-wide capacity needs assessment report and the creation of an operational manual. In doing so, NNNGO was able to build capacity on governance, strategy, and organisational development for 300 participating organizations across six regions in the country.
- **ANONG** (Uruguay) implemented a project aimed at strengthening its members' capacities in communications and advocacy, in a moment of shrinking civic space in the country. The platform thus increased its media outreach and organized a discussion between parliamentarians, government officials and NGOs on the role of civil society in developing human rights-based public policies.

Further details about and learning from all projects can be found on a new section of the Forus website: [Supporting our national members.](#)

/ PROJECTS

Select a topic



Fri 1 Nov 2019

Safeguarding for Development conference

Analysis of good practices, studies or researches - Creation and implementation of capacity development strategies for your members - Strengthen communication and collaboration with the national members of your platform



December 2018

Amplifying Indian CSO's role and effectiveness in implementation of SDGs through awareness building and multi-stakeholder connect

Capacity building for advocacy - Monitoring of the National Implementation of the A2030



September 2018

Articulating and strengthening strategic sectors of Civil Society through alliances for monitoring and advocacy for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda in Peru

Capacity building for advocacy - Monitoring of the National Implementation of the A2030 - Strengthen strategic planning and/or platform activities assessment

FIND THE NEW SECTION HERE



Forus Leadership Development Program: Forus is preparing a fifth cycle of projects based on an external evaluation and feed-back collected from Forus' members. This next cycle, expected to start in 2021, will be further focused on sharing the network the experiences and practices of Forus' membership.

Support to regional members:

Forus' regional members are actively involved in a variety of initiatives within Forus, according to their priorities and needs. They contribute content to toolkits and podcasts, participate in working groups, carry out research, publish papers and co-host online events with Forus, amongst other activities. In 2020, they played an important role in sharing information within Forus on the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic. This was the fourth year in which Forus provided resources to five regional coalitions to support them in developing capacities in advocacy, in strengthening their structures and in supporting their members. Below you will find selected highlights per region:

ASIA - ASIA DEVELOPMENT ALLIANCE

In 2020, ADA finalized a regional report entitled "Monitoring and Review of SDG 16 + at the National and Regional Level (2015-2020) in Asia", based on 13 case studies from across Asia. The report aims not only at looking at the gaps and challenges of SDG 16+ implementation in Asia, but also includes good practices that could help policy makers understand the perspectives and priorities of the communities examined. Furthermore, ADA's advocacy efforts, in particular on the issue of shrinking civic space in the context of the Covid-19 pandemic, have played an important role and strengthened regional solidarity.

THE PACIFIC - PIANGO

In partnership with the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), the Business and Human Rights Resource Centre, and the Citizen's Constitutional Forum, PIANGO organized an online training titled "Building Back Better; Business, Human Rights and the SDGs in the Pacific". The aim of the training was to encourage peer learning in the observance of corporate social responsibility in the region and to build skills for influencing government policy-making and business decisions. Despite the pandemic and natural disasters in the region, PIANGO continued to support its members, for instance with the preparation for official interventions during the VNR sessions of the 2020 UN HLPF.

WEST AFRICA - REPAOC

REPAOC has already worked for several years on raising awareness on vaccination among the region's population together with expert partners in this field and as the host of the Organisation d'Afrique Francophone pour le Renforcement des Systèmes de Santé et de la Vaccination (OAFRESS). Raising public awareness and discrediting misinformation about vaccination was a priority for the organization in 2020, thus REPAOC surveyed its members about the population's perception of vaccination programs and about how these programs are communicated about. REPAOC also trained its members about developing online strategies and activities.

LATIN AMERICA - MESA DE ARTICULACIÓN

Following the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic, MESA developed several activities in defence of solidarity and democracy in the region. MESA gathered data from their national members through online dialogues to develop a political analysis of the regional context. They engaged in intra- and inter-regional dialogues to reflect on the role of civil society in post-pandemic reconstruction and co-developed statements such as "The impacts of COVID 19 in Latin America and the Caribbean: challenges and perspectives for NGOs".

CENTRAL AFRICA - REPONGAC

As Chair of COPAC (Coalition of Central African CSOs for peace and conflict prevention), REPONGAC continued to consolidate itself as a powerful civil society voice from Central Africa on the topic of conflict. The regional coalition works to strengthen its members' capacities to monitor the implementation of SGD 16, for instance through the organisation of exchanges on how to prevent shrinking of civic space in Central Africa and to protect the fundamental freedoms of expression, assembly and public protest in the region. An online workshop was organized by REPONGAC and Innovation for Change for civil society leaders from 10 ECCAS Member States called "Central African countries and the impact of laws on civic space".

Solidarity grants: The solidarity grants have been put in place in order to support civil society coordination processes in countries where there are no national platforms members of Forus. Since 2018, Forus provided support to regional coalitions to work in partnership with CSOs in 6 countries in Asia and the Middle East, where local groups convened and discussed how they could further coordinate their action at national level.

As part of this initiative, Forus supported ANND's (Arab NGO Network for Development) project for the period February 2019 to February 2021. This project focuses on strengthening dialogue amongst NGOs from Jordan, from Tunisia and working with Syria, with themes also covering economic and social rights, and the restrictions of civic space.





RESPONDING TO THE IMPACTS OF COVID-19

The Covid-19 taskforce:

Since the beginning of the pandemic, Forus has created a Covid-19 Taskforce. The objective was to develop an online space for Forus regional and national members to share information, experiences, challenges and good practices linked to the pandemic.

The purpose was to identify the main trends on the work of Forus members - how was their work affected? How did they adapt to the impacts of the pandemic? How did they reorient their activities and what kind of new actions did they undertake? Did Forus members establish "learning from failure" strategies?

The group enabled Forus to monitor the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic in the countries and through work of its members, based on two member surveys completed in June and July 2020. The Taskforce also provided the opportunity to inform Forus' members about the network's COVID - related advocacy, communications, capacity development and fundraising work.

Structural support:

In the context of the Covid-19 pandemic, Forus launched this new type of support to respond to member needs linked to the pandemic and to the accelerated trend towards digitalization. Forus provided small amounts of resources to support its members, with the goal of increasing their adaptability to work in this changing context. These resources were mainly invested in equipment (for example, purchase of computers or software) or services for the digital development of the platforms.





TOOLKITS

Exploring new funding approaches for civil society

(Available in English, French and Spanish), November 2020.

This toolkit is for civil society networks and organisations interested in improving their practices around funding, financial sustainability and in influencing the donors supporting them. [A video](#) has been released where Forus, SPONG, InterAction and Bond (Forus' members) share their experiences on accessing funding as NGO networks.

READ HERE



Mapping innovation thinking, culture, and practices among Forus members

(Available in English, French, Spanish and Portuguese), December 2020.

The research Report is the result of Forus' collaboration with Ana Luísa Silva, a PhD candidate at the University of Lisbon, to situate innovation thinking, culture, and practices among Forus' members. The study assesses innovation culture, capabilities, and barriers in CSO networks.

READ HERE



Safeguarding toolkit:

In 2020, Forus continued to develop a toolkit on safeguarding entitled "Keeping people safe: a guide to safeguarding for non-government organisations and platforms" which will include an overview on international safeguarding standards as well as some introductory key safeguarding principles and a self-assessment tool.

The guide will gather testimonies from civil society platforms or organizations, illustrating key questions, common challenges and evolving practices to help. It will cater to a dual audience: NGOs of different sizes and levels of experience with safeguarding, and NGO platforms operating at national, regional and international levels. It will be launched in 2021.





INFLUENCE

WE ADVOCATE WITH NGOS TO EXERCISE MORE INFLUENCE ON INTERNATIONAL, REGIONAL AND NATIONAL DECISION-MAKING PROCESSES AND POLICIES IN ORDER TO PROMOTE INCLUSIVE AND SUSTAINABLE SOCIETIES AND TO REINFORCE THE ROLE OF CIVIL SOCIETY IN INTERNATIONAL GOVERNANCE OUR ADVOCACY IS STRONGLY DRIVEN BY OUR SHARED VALUES AND BY OUR MEMBERS' PRIORITIES AND EXPERTISE.

AGENDA 2030

Agenda 2030: Enabling participatory processes from Forus members all over the world

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

UN High-level Political Forum (HLPF - July 7-16th): #UNmute Campaign and the Voluntary National Reviews process

For Forus' advocacy activities, the HLPF represents an opportunity to advocate for CSOs and with CSO platforms and to highlight their participation in decision-making, policy coherence and the development of strategies for sustainability.

In 2020, the HLPF was entirely virtual, increasing the chances of civil society to be "muted". Thus, Forus launched a virtual communication campaign to make sure civil society's diverse voices get heard using the following hashtag #UNmute campaign on social media.

The HLPF involves the presentation of the Voluntary National Reviews (VNR) that have been submitted by Member States to the UN on their progress to date in implementing the 2030 Agenda at national level. Several Forus members presented shadow or spotlight reports, which are a well-established tool of civil society to hold governments accountable on country-level progress on the SDGs and the [2030 Agenda](#).

Forus & other international CSOs published a joint letter, urging the UN and its Member States to take measures to ensure inclusive modalities to facilitate the extensive virtual participation of Civil Society.

Reports, events & webinars on Civil Society and its role in the effective implementation of the SDGs:

- **“Are governments delivering on the capacity development of civil society to ensure a successful implementation of the 2030 Agenda”** launched at a UN HLPF side event (see below details of the events). The report is based on the Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs) submitted by Member States to the UN and highlights the inaction of many governments in capacity development. It calls for greater political attention to be paid to strengthening and properly resourcing civil society organisations so that they can work for sustainable development (report available in English, French and Spanish).
- **“Realising the potential of Goal 16 of the 2030 Agenda to promote and protect civic space”** launched at a virtual side event. The report was prepared in collaboration with the Asia Development Alliance (ADA) and looks at the growing international trend of shrinking civic space, and the many restrictions faced by civil society organisations in terms of their participation in civic life. The report gathers case studies from Forus members with the goal to raise their awareness on the potential of Goal 16 from the 2030 Agenda.

Forus **side events (virtual)**:

- CSO coalitions' role in the Decade of Action after Covid-19 organized with the Governments of Nigeria, France, Spain & Austria and SDG Watch Europe, SDG Watch Austria, EEB, A4SD, Futuro Común, Civil Society Coalition, the EU, FWP PFE, Wada na Todo, 4d.
- Protecting civic space during the COVID-19 pandemic: Examining the role that SDG 16+ can play in responding to current threats with Forus members ZCSD (Zambia), CCC (Cambodia), Global Fokus (Denmark), and external partners Civicus, Gahnri, The Danish Institute of Human Rights and the Government of Denmark.
- “Delivering a whole of society approach to an accelerated Decade of Action” with A4SD.
- Accelerating ‘whole of society’ action on SDG implementation through innovative civil society partnerships with ADA.
- How to strengthen the partnership between the government and civil society to accelerate the implementation of SDG 16/17 in the context of COVID-19 ?
- Enabling strong civil society engagement in the Voluntary National Reviews and the wider SDG follow up and review process: in French with Forus members SPONG (Burkina Faso), ADIR (Burundi), CSCI (Ivory Coast) & Espace Associatif (Morocco) and in Spanish with ANC (Peru), ASONOG (Honduras) and other external partners.
- The role of SDG 16 + in accelerating 2030 Agenda Monitoring and implementation organized with the Asian Development Alliance (ADA), the regional coalition member of Forus in Asia.



Webinars:

- Webinar of the Progressing National SDG Implementation report launch (February 26th, 2020)
- Webinar “Exploring the current collaborations and future tendencies on how global networks can contribute to shifting power towards Southern actors in the context of shrinking space”, jointly organised with Forus member Bond (United Kingdom) (March 25th 2020)
- Webinar “New approaches, tools, and technologies for advocacy in civil society networks and coalitions” jointly organised with ISEG, Lisbon School of Economics and Management (April 9th, 2020)
- Webinar “Promoting effective civil society engagement with SDG implementation in challenging times” jointly organised by Forus, Action for Sustainable Development, TAP Network and Together 2030 (April 30th 2020)
- Webinar on "Transformative approaches to act for SDGs" with Bridge 47 (May 28th 2020)
- “Promote civic space and strengthen inclusion - Global Perspectives 2020” webinar (November 4th)
- Participation to the campaign “The Global SDGs Accountability survey”;
<https://sdgaccountability.org/decade/>

Toolkit:

- **Transformative action to realize the 2030 Agenda through effective coalitions** (Available in English and French - September 2020).

While implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is primarily the responsibility of governments, the scale and ambition of the agenda call for contributions from stakeholders across society including parliamentarians, citizens, civil society organizations, the private sector, academia, and the media. Based on a review of multi-stakeholder coalitions from around the world, this working paper provides a series of good practices and evidence - informed recommendations that can be used to strengthen the governance of coalitions in order to trigger accelerated and transformative actions for sustainable development.

ALL REPORTS





Civil society organizations (CSOs) are crucial actors in promoting peaceful inclusive societies through sustainable people-centred development. Yet over the past decade, their work and its impact have been deeply affected by increasing restrictions on CSO operations and the targeting of human rights defenders and environmentalists.

Alongside the growth of restrictive measures, civil society has been campaigning to defend its legitimate space in society in various ways. Yet the crisis in governance, reflected in challenges to democratic norms and closing civic space, continues to unfold, further impacted by emergency responses to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The report reviews three key aspects of the CSO enabling environment:

- 1) legal and regulatory issues, including the digital environment;
- 2) space for effective and inclusive policy dialogue, including CSO diversity, roles and effectiveness;
- 3) resources, capacities and partnerships, including narratives to address the stigmatization and marginalization of CSOs despite being legitimate development actors in their own right.

ENABLING ENVIRONMENT

Enabling Environment for civil society: take urgent and concerted action to challenge major human rights violations

Report: A Scoping Study of CSO Platforms' Experiences In Promoting an Enabling Environment ([Executive summary](#) available in English, French, Spanish & Portuguese, [Full report](#) in English and French - December 2020).

Forus commissioned a scoping study on international and national experiences to identify recommendations on how national and regional coalitions, and Forus itself, can best promote a CSO enabling environment. Based on a systematic literature review, online survey and 27 interviews with Forus members and allies, this paper examines the current status of CSO experiences and strategies, in particular of CSO platforms, to promote an enabling environment.

READ THE REPORT



FINANCING FOR DEVELOPMENT

Financing for Development: prioritise human rights and planetary well-being over financial interest and economic growth

In 2020, Forus developed its work on Financing for sustainable development through the creation of a new working group and through co-facilitating a wide coalition of CSOs working in development in the lead-up to the first-ever global summit of Public Development Banks (PDBs) called Finance in Common, bringing together 450 public development banks and which took place in November 2020. In the run-up to the summit, Forus ensured that civil society contributed to pushing the ambition of the PDBs' commitments prepared for the summit, through advocacy and recommendations on how PDBs can act to meaningfully contribute to the achievement of the Paris Agreement, the SDGs, and the wider sustainable development agenda. Forus collaborated with a large number of civil society actors from the climate, environment, gender justice and Human Rights community. This led to a joint CSO declaration on the summit. Forus' Chair Iara Pietricovsky moreover represented a cross-section of civil society during the High-Level panel of the summit, alongside French President Emmanuel Macron and other high-level leaders from governments and multilateral organisations. Forus plans on continuing to strengthen its engagement on this topic in 2021.

The Big Changes needed in Financing for Sustainable development (position paper available in English and French - November 2020).

This position paper addresses the cumulative impacts of converging international crises including the coronavirus health pandemic, the accelerating climate and biodiversity crises and shows how they have contributed to an extremely challenging global macro-economic context leading to a strong possibility of a prolonged sharp slowdown in global economic activity.



PERSPECTIVES FOR 2021 AND BEYOND





#SUPPORT

Future convergence: cultivating Practices of Collaboration for Social Change (Forus' Barefoot Guide)

We all know that collaboration is vital for transformative social change. But how do we practice collaboration in these times? That is the question driving the Forus Barefoot Guide. The Barefoot guide is a practical resource intended for individuals and organizations who want to improve their learning processes and social change practices in the field. In this Guide, we explore real experiences of innovative initiatives, practices, ways of collaborating and leadership forms that offer hope for a way forward for humanity. The guide will be available in French/Spanish together with a micro-site and conversation starters accompanying each chapter.

#INFLUENCE

MarchWithUs campaign

On the occasion of the International Women's Rights Day in March 2021, Forus' will launch its #MarchWithUs digital campaign - a full month to reflect on the voices of women on the frontline of social change. From Afghanistan to Bolivia, France, Spain and Nepal, we will share the stories of dozens of activists fighting for gender justice and to #unmute civil society.

[FIND ALL CAMPAIGNS](#)





#ENGAGE!

Forus participative campaigns

How do communities deal with disasters? How can we fight against sexual harassment? From disaster risk reduction, to safeguarding communities in practice, in 2021, Forus is launching several campaigns sharing challenges and innovative solutions from around the globe.

[FIND ALL CAMPAIGNS](#)



#CONNECT

A Space For Us podcast

In 2020, Forus launched the "A Space for Us" podcast on issues important to civil society. This storytelling project brings together Forus member and allies from around the globe. In 2021, we will continue to feature activists, civil society organisations and movements to talk about digital collective rights, building resilient communities and gender equality.

[FIND ALL PODCASTS](#)

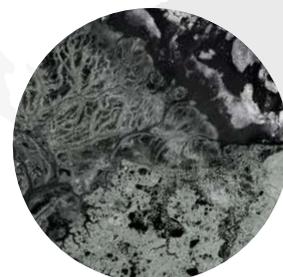




#INFLUENCE

2021 HLPF campaign on Digital rights

On the occasion of the UN High-Level Political Forum 2021 (HLPF), Forus and TechSoup will launch a collective campaign with partners and allies to collect ideas and spark debates about digitalization. Using the tagline #Let's Talk Digital - No Civic Space Without Digital Space - Digitize your Rights! the idea is to shape the conversation around digitalization with an emphasis on the involvement of civil society organizations in decision-making spaces.



AGENDA 2030



FORUS

**FINANCIALS &
FUNDING**





Forus' donors in 2020 & the challenge of building strong and resilient networks

We would like to thank the donors that supported the work of the Forus network in 2020: the European Union, the French Development Agency, Fondation de France, Bread for the World and the Monegasque Cooperation for Development. We deeply appreciate the quality of dialogue and partnership with our donors, who, beyond providing financial support, also provide technical expertise and act as allies of the Forus network.

The current global financial context presents resourcing challenges for Forus members on all continents. We therefore continue to pool the expertise and resources of the network, so that we can be resilient within this context. We will continue to seek to develop partnerships with donors and allies who share Forus' mission and values.



FINANCIAL REPORT

Income Statement for the year ended
31 December 2020

- **Revenues (in-kind contributions included): €1,208,420**

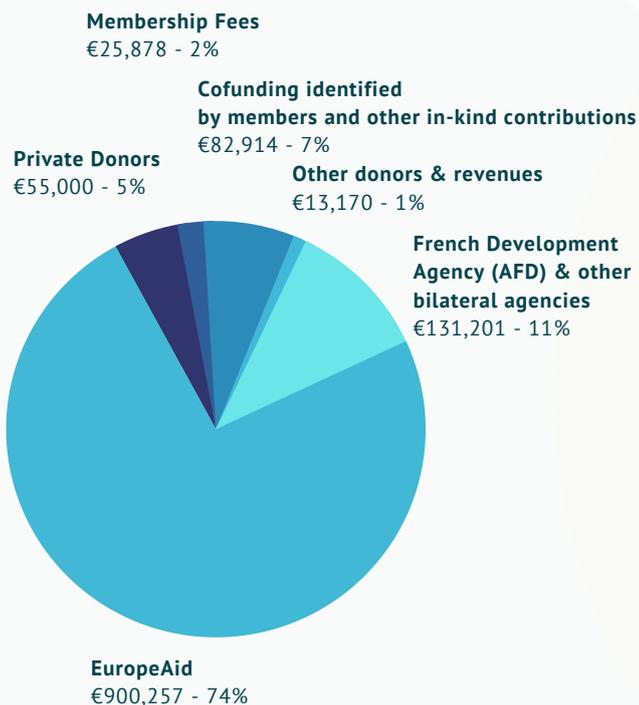
Forus activities in 2020 were mostly financed by public grants: EuropeAid (€900,257) and the French Development Agency and other bilateral agencies (€131,201). The level of resources from other sources (e.g. foundations) remains limited (€55,000 in total were awarded by Fondation de France and Bread for the World). The regional and national members supported by Forus in 2020 could identify co-funding for a total of €82,914. The total volume of membership fees collected in 2020 remained stable (€25,878).

- **Expenditures (in-kind contributions included): €1,198,192**

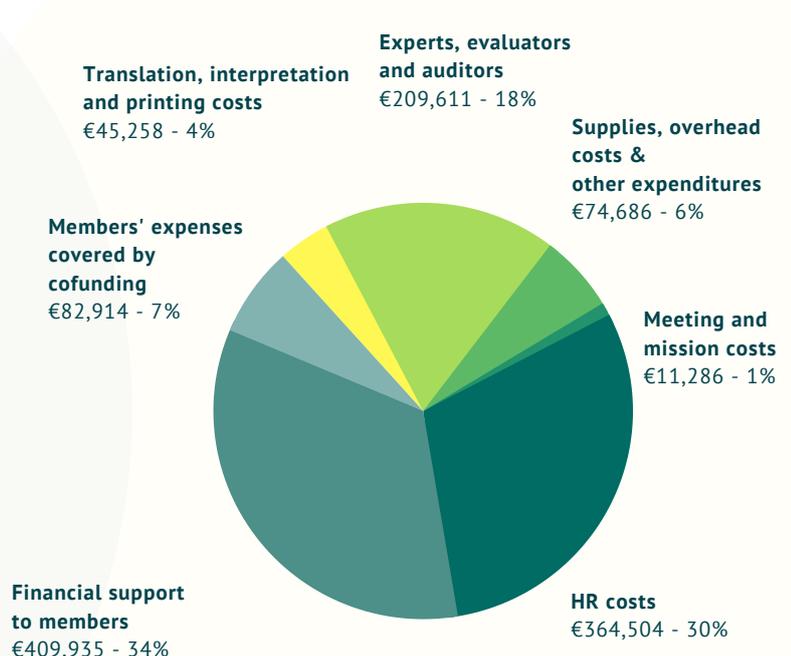
Forus' main expenditure item is the financial support given to members: 6 regional coalitions and 36 national platforms were supported in 2020 for a total of €409,935. HR (secretariat) costs (€364,504) have slightly increased in 2020 due to turn-over and slight increase in capacity. Expert and consultant fees (€209,611) have also increased, due to several new research activities. Meeting costs were very limited due to the covid-19 pandemic.

- **Result:** The positive result (+ €10,228) of the 2020 financial year is related to unrestricted revenues (such as the membership fees) and savings with respect to overhead costs at the secretariat level.

2020 Revenues



2020 Expenditures



FORUS

MEMBERS



Regional Coalitions

ADA - Asia Development Alliance, Asia

CONCORD - European NGO Confederation for Relief and Development, Europe

MESA - Mesa de Articulación de Asociaciones Nacionales y Redes de ONGs de América Latina y el Caribe

PIANGO - Pacific Islands Association of Non-Governmental Organisations, Pacific

REPAOC - Réseau des Plate-formes nationales d'ONG d'Afrique de l'Ouest et du centre, West Africa

REPONGAC - Réseau des Plate-formes des ONG de l'Afrique Centrale, Central Africa

SADC-CNGO - Southern Africa Development Community Council of Non-Governmental Organizations, Southern Africa

National NGO Platforms

ABONG - Associação Brasileira de ONGs, Brazil

ACCIÓN - Asociación Chilena de ONG, Chile

ADIR - Action Développement et Intégration Régionale, Burundi

Alianza ONG - Alianza de Organizaciones No Gubernamentales, Dominican Republic

ANC - Asociación Nacional de Centros de Investigación, Promoción Social y Desarrollo, Peru

ANONG - Asociación Nacional de ONG, Uruguay

ASONOG - Asociación de organismos no gubernamentales, Honduras

BOCONGO - Botswana Council of NonGovernmental Organisations, Botswana

Bond - British Overseas NGOs for Development, the UK

CANGO - China Association for NGO Cooperation, China

CCC - Cooperation Committee for Cambodia, Cambodia

CCIC - Canadian Council for International Co-operation, Canada

CCOAI - Conseil de Concertation des Organisations d'Appui aux Initiatives de Base, Rwanda

CCOD - Conseil de Concertation des ONG de développement, Congo

CCONG - Confederación Colombiana de ONG, Colombia

CEPS - Citizens Engagement Platform Seychelles, Seychelles

CFRONG - Collectif des Fédérations et Réseaux d'ONG du Bénin, Benin

CID - Council for International Development, New Zealand

CILONG - Centre d'information et de Liaison des ONG, TCHAD, Chad

CIONGCA - Conseil Inter ONG de Centrafrique, Central African Republic

CNONGD - Conseil National des ONG de Développement, The Democratic Republic of the Congo

CODE-NGO - Caucus of Development NGO Networks, Philippines

CICSO - Cook Islands Association of NGOs, Cook Islands

Coordination Sud - Solidarité Urgence Développement, France

Coordinadora - Coordinadora de ONG de cooperación para el Desarrollo, Spain

CONGAC - Collectif des ONG Agréées du Cameroun, Cameroon

CONGAD - Conseil des ONG d'Appui au Développement, Sénégal

CONGCOOP - Coordinacion de ONG y Cooperativas, Guatemala

CSCI - Convention de la Société Civile Ivoirienne, Ivory Coast

Dóchas - The Irish Association of Non-Governmental Development Organisations, Ireland

EENGD - Encuentro de Entidades No Gubernamentales para el Desarrollo, Argentina

Espace Associatif, Morocco

FCOSS - Fiji Council of Social Service, Fiji

FECONG - Fédération des Collectif d'ONG du Mali, Mali

FINGO - Finnish NGO Platform, Finland

FOND - Romanian NGDO Platform, Romania

FONGDD - Forum des ONG pour le Développement Durable, Guinea

FONG-STP - Federação das ONGs de Sao Tomé e Príncipe, Sao Tomé & Príncipe

FONGTO - Fédération des ONG au Togo, Togo

FONGA - Foro das ONGs Angolanas, Angola

FORS - Czech Forum for Development Cooperation, Czech Republic

Global Focus, Denmark

HAND - Hungarian Association of NGOs for Development and Humanitarian Aid, Hungary

INFID - International NGO Forum on Indonesian Development, Indonesia

InterAction, USA

JANIC - Japan NGO Center for International Cooperation, Japan

JOINT - League For NGOs in Mozambique, Mozambique

KANGO - Kiribati Association of NGOs, Kiribati

KCOG - Korea NGO Council for Overseas Development Cooperation, Korea

LAPAS - Latvijas Platforma attīstības sadarbībai, Latvia

Lithuanian NGDO Platform - Lithuanian National Non-Governmental

Development Cooperation Organisations' Platform, Lithuania

MACOSS - Mauritius Council of Social Service, Mauritius

NFN - NGO - Federation of Nepal, Nepal

NNNGO - Nigeria Network of NGO, Nigeria

PNOSCM - Plateforme Nationale des Organisations de la Société Civile de Madagascar, Madagascar

Plataforma ONGD - Plataforma Portuguesa das Organizações

Não-Governamentais para o Desenvolvimento Portuguese Platform

NGOD, Portugal

Plateforme belge des ONG de développement et d'urgence, Belgium

PLATONG - Plataforma das ONGs de Cabo Verde, Cape Verde

POJOAJU - Asociación de Organizaciones No Gubernamentales del Paraguay, Paraguay

SKOP - National Platform of Maltese NGDOs, Malta

SLOGA - Slovenian Global Action, Slovenia

SPONG - Secrétariat Permanent des ONG du Burkina Faso, Burkina Faso

Taiwan-Aid - Taiwan Alliance in International Development, Taiwan

TANGO - The Association of NonGovernmental Organizations, Gambia

UNITAS - Unión Nacional de Instituciones para el Trabajo de Acción Social, Red

Unitas, Bolivia

UNNGOF - Uganda National NGO Forum, Uganda

VANI - Voluntary Action Network India, India

ZCSD - Zambia Council for Social Development, Zambia



Forus, previously known as the International Forum of National NGO Platforms (IFP/FIP), is a member-led network of 68 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.



Fondation
de
France

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