

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR RESEARCH CONSULTANT

“Promising approaches in resourcing and strengthening NGOs active in the development sector for the 21st century”.

Recruitment of a research consultant to support Forus in:

- (i) Conducting a literature review of donor-initiated & academic studies over the past decade into sources and modalities of financing for NGOs active in the development sector in different parts of the world, with a particular focus on funding for their advocacy & capacity development activities.
- (ii) Developing a range of case studies of different funding sources & modalities for NGOs active in the development sector, based on field research involving members of Forus and its partner networks at different levels (i.e. national platforms, regional coalitions, global networks and local grassroots organisations.)
- (iii) Analysing and identifying the strengths and weaknesses of different funding sources/ modalities and the contribution that they make to increasing the effectiveness of individual NGOs active in the development sector, strengthening the sector more generally and supporting the development of essential infrastructure and a supportive ecosystem for civil society. Different funding sources/modalities will be analysed according to a range of predetermined criteria
- (iv) Formulating recommendations for the development of more sustainable and effective funding sources/ modalities for NGOs active in the development sector in the future, given the new requirements of Agenda 2030 and in response to the diverse needs and contexts of such NGOs globally
- (v) Examining the question of how the building and maintenance of new networks and partnerships by NGOs active in the development sector, including a range of inter-sectoral, cross sectoral, regional and global networks, can be sustainably resourced into the future.

1. Background and rationale

Forus (*formerly the International Forum of National NGO Platforms*) is a national network of 69 national NGO platforms and 7 regional coalitions from all continents, led by its members. One of the main objectives of the network’s current strategy (2016-2020) is to become an influential international player and benchmark for capacity development at the national, regional and international levels.

Forus members recently mandated the network to begin preparing its next Strategic Plan (2021-2025). This Plan will position Forus as a key actor and global advocate for sustainable and adequate resourcing of civil society around the world, with a focus on the capacity development of the sector. Forus is therefore commissioning research into the current funding sources and modalities for NGOs active in the development sector in different parts of the world, operating at local/ grassroots, national, regional and global levels.

The aim of this research is to investigate the strengths and weaknesses of different funding sources and modalities on which NGOs active in the development sector currently depend to help Forus to shape informed recommendations about future effective resourcing of such NGOs, with a focus on their capacity development, and on supporting the development of essential infrastructure and the emergence of a supportive ecosystem for civil society more generally.

2. Objective of the service

The main objective of the research will be to produce a high- quality report for the Forus network which will analyse some of the funding sources and modalities currently supporting NGOs active in the development sector around the world. This research will include a literature review of up to date studies into current funding sources and modalities for civil society (commissioned by UN, OECD, EU and others). These findings will be supplemented by case studies/field research involving Forus members, their partner organisations and relevant think-tanks and experts and based on a case study approach. The key findings of the research report,, in particular its recommendations, will also be included by the consultant in a capacity development toolkit for Forus members entitled “Promising approaches in resourcing and strengthening NGOs active in the development sector for the 21st century”.

3- Tasks of the consultant

The consultant will be responsible for:

(i) Conducting a literature review of key studies carried out to date into current funding sources and modalities for NGOs active in the development sector around the world

(ii) Using the results of the literature review to design and conduct field research involving Forus members from different parts of the world, some of its key partner organisations, and relevant think - tanks and experts where appropriate. A case study approach will be used to highlight some of the best and worst practices relating to existing funding sources and modalities for NGOs active in the development sector working in diverse contexts globally.

(iii) Analysing the results of the field research in collaboration with the Forus Secretariat, Funding sources/modalities will be analysed according to a range of criteria including: predictability, sustainability, flexibility, diversity, transparency, accountability. The extent to which funding sources/modalities promote innovation and the independence of NGOs active in the development sector will also be examined.

(iv) Proposing key recommendations on the future sustainable and effective resourcing of NGOs active in the development sector globally.

(v) Developing a Forus Capacity Development Toolkit, based on current promising approaches from the field, on how civil society globally can best be resourced in the 21st century. This work should be done in collaboration with the Forus Secretariat

3. Deliverables

At the end of the assignment, the consultant will have to produce the following deliverables:

- A research report in the English language (combining literature review and field research) into current and potential future resourcing of NGOs active in the development sector. The report must be provided in an electronic and paper version.
- A Forus Toolkit on “Promising approaches in resourcing and strengthening NGOs active in the development sector for the 21st century” which will be informed by the key findings and recommendations of the research report.

4. Location and duration of the research work

The research consultant can work remotely and carry out the literature search online and the field research through online interviews with Forus members and other relevant parties. Collaboration on the Forus Toolkit can also be done online and remotely. There will be between 10-15 days’ work involved in total to deliver on the work specified above.

The Consultant will complete his/her work over a 4 month period (January-April 2019)

5. Calendar of work

| Period | Key Tasks |
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| Phase 1 January Literature Review | Conduct literature review of available donor-initiated, academic and civil society studies into financing for NGOs active in the development sector Analyse and write up summary of key findings |
| Phase 2 Feb/March Online surveys | Design online survey aimed at Forus members and its partners, surveying their experience of CSO financing sources and modalities Carry out online surveys (10-15 approx.) with selected national platforms, regional coalitions, global networks and local grassroots NGOs who belong to Forus or its partner organisations Develop range of case studies based on results of online surveys Develop key recommendations for the development of more sustainable and effective future funding sources/ modalities for NGOs active in the development sector |
| Phase 3 April Report-writing Development of toolkit | Write report synthesising results of literature review, main findings of case studies and recommendations arising Develop a toolkit (5-10 pg. max) aimed at Forus members, setting out possible sources and modalities of future CSO funding and based on the key findings and recommendations of the literature review and the case studies |
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5. Profile and qualifications of the consultant

- Preferably hold a postgraduate degree (PHD or Masters) in the field of research, in development studies/development economics/development finance
- Previous experience working with an NGO active in the development sector, particularly on Financing for Development and/or fund-raising
- Previous experience of conducting field research and online interviews
- An excellent standard of written and spoken English, fluency in French or Spanish (preferably both) and strong writing and communication skills.

6. Composition of the application

The application file should include:

- a detailed and complete Curriculum Vitae (with at least 2 references)
- a letter of motivation addressed to the Director of Forus
- a price proposal

The file will have to be submitted by COB Friday 14th December in electronic format at the following address: recruitment@forus-international.org

Interviews will be held between 17th and 23rd December 2018.