CAPACITY STRENGTHENING JOURNEY 2024-2025 FAQs& GLOSSARY

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. What is Forus Capacity Strengthening Approach?

Forus seeks to **support** members through a participatory approach based on peer-to-peer processes, including peer learning and knowledge exchange, pooling resources in a dynamic and multilingual environment. Focus areas and tools are driven by members' needs, lived experiences, knowledge and expectations.

2. What is Forus Capacity Strengthening Journey

- **A.** Co-design priority areas/ core competencies of organisational development and selection criteria with Peer Committee.
- **B.** Listen to members needs and strengths through the Organisational Assessment.
- **C.** Ideate the best learning opportunity based on members needs and areas of interest (financial support, leadership development, learning modules, peer-exchanges, etc.)
- **D.** General inductions and set-up ways of working for grant management and reporting, and monitoring, evaluation, accountability and learning.
- **E.** Kick off the learning activities with frequent reporting back, adjust and reiterating moments.

3. What is the role of the Peer Committee?

The Peer Committee will review the organisational assessments, selection criteria, and processes to select the final cohort of Cycle 6 partners.

4. Who can apply to join the Peer Committee?
All Forus members are encouraged to apply. We welcome diverse perspectives and experiences. Simultaneous interpretation is provided.

5. Will participating in the Peer Committee affect the platform's eligibility for participation?
No, your participation in the Peer Committee will not compromise nor facilitate your organisation's eligibility for financial support through the National Platforms Projects.

6. What is Forus organisational assessment?

It is a self-reflection opportunity available for all Forus member to identify their position in their organisational development path. The questions in the assessment evaluate platform's strengths and areas for improvement on core areas for networks of civil society organisations. All questions include membership engagement and diversity and inclusion as a cross-cutting element in every area of the platform's life. The overall analysis of the 2024 Forus organisational assessment will provide a baseline for the network's Capacity Strengthening framework and inform the priority areas of interest of Forus members where additional resources need to be allocated.

7. What are the National Platforms Partnerships (NPP) projects

Once completed the organisational assessment and identified key priorities for platforms to develop in the short term, Forus members can present a project proposal to participate in the NPP. NPP projects are a diverse range of opportunities that include financial and in-kind support to a selected group of Forus members per cycle. The design and decision of this activity is led by a core group of Forus members called the 'Peer Committee'.

The NPP is divided into cycles. Since 2017, almost 50 national platforms have participated in this partnership in 5 cycles and in August 2024 a 6th call for proposals will be launched offering up to 30,000 euros to a maximum of 12 platforms for cycle 6: November 2024 to December 2025. The in-kind support includes project proposal guidance, virtual sessions on grant management, capacity strengthening in various areas, networking opportunities, and visibility.

8. What are the objectives of the National Platforms Partnerships projects?

The ultimate goal is to **strengthen the voice of civil society worldwide and achieve ambitious and measurable impact in sustainable and inclusive development.**

Through Forus Capacity Strengthening work, the network aims to:
- Reinforce national platform's capacity to be functional, legitimate, accountable, inclusive and efficient NGO networks in their country.
- Support national platforms in achieving their own organizational goals, engaging their members effectively, and responding to national and local needs.
- Boost national platforms' capacities to voice their constituents' position and ambitions while remaining effective and independent actors despite the growing restrictions for civil society.
- Increase national civil society organizations' ability to hold governments and general decision-makers to account and to stand in solidarity with other CSOs globally.

9. What is the focus of Cycle 6 of the National Platforms Partnerships?

Cycle 6 aims to reactivate Forus Capacity Strengthening Support, enabling national platforms to enhance their organisational capacities and effectively respond to the needs of their members. The focus of this cycle is **organisational development.**

10. What is the timeline for call for proposals for NPP cycle 6?

Key deadlines include the self-assessment period from 12 August to 9 September 2024, and the close of applications on 9 September 2024. Selected projects may start as early as November 2024.

11. What are the criteria for selecting Cycle 6 partners?

To be eligible, organisations must be Forus national members, be up to date with membership fees, debt-free, and located in countries listed as Official Development Assistance recipients by the Development Assistance Committee. This is a requirement from the French Development Agency, which is the main source of funds for this cycle. Eligible countries are located in Africa, Asia, Pacific and Latin America except for the following countries, which are not eligible: Chile, Cook Islands, Japan, New-Zealand, South Korea, Uruguay, Seychelles & Taiwan.

12. What if my platform does not pass the eligibility quiz?
If your platform does not meet the eligibility criteria, you can express interest in other Capacity Strengthening opportunities, such as the Forus Leadership Development Programme or Peer-Learning exchanges.

13. How will the selection process be conducted?
The Peer Committee will apply participatory decision-making principles to select partners. The process ensures equitable opportunities for all members, with feedback provided to applicants.

14. Will training be provided in financial management?
Yes, there will be training opportunities on financial management, and platforms managing institutional grants for the first time may request additional financial support for training and bookkeeping software setup.

15. How will the impact and progress of the projects be measured?
A baseline will be established through the organisational assessment, and progress will be tracked through tools provided at the beginning of the programme and regular check-

ins. An end-line survey will evaluate the impact once the cycle is completed. Partners of the NPP projects will disseminate their stories of change or learnings through blogs, videos or infographics with their members and through Forus communication channels.

16.   Can I submit my application in languages other than English?

Yes, applications can be submitted in English, Spanish, French, and Portuguese.

17.   What should I do if I have more questions or require clarification?

For further questions or clarifications, please contact elisa.novoa@forus-international.org for assistance.

A **Questions & Answers session** will be available in English, Spanish, French and Portuguese on Friday 16 August 2024 between 13:00 – 14:30 UTC (Click here to see your local time). **REGISTER HERE**

GLOSSARY

Organisational Development: A process that enhances an organisation's capacity through planned change in its culture, systems, and processes to improve effectiveness.

In-kind support: Non-monetary contributions, such as goods or services, provided to an organisation to support its activities.

Peer-sharing: Online semi-structured discussions among organisations that share similar areas of interest to exchange knowledge, experiences, and best practices.

Learning partnerships: Collaborative relationships focused on collective learning to enhance skills, knowledge, and capacities between 2 partner organisations in different 'maturity levels' of organizational development.

Failures Clubs: Regular virtual events in small groups where organisations share and analyse failures to learn from mistakes and improve future practices.

Thematic Modules: Structured units of learning or programming centred around specific themes, designed to address issues or competencies identified in the organisational assessment.

Strategy Development: The process of defining an organisation's long-term goals and the approach to achieving them through analysis and planning.

Strategy Operationalisation: Translating strategic goals into actionable plans and tasks to integrate them effectively into daily operations. This includes project management, resource allocation, tasks distribution, team coordination, etc.

Theory of Change: A detailed explanation of how and why a desired change is expected to occur in a specific context, outlining the pathway to outcomes, the assumptions to be tested and learning questions to be answered.

Results Framework: A structured plan that outlines expected results, indicators for success, and the relationships between activities, outputs, outcomes, and impacts.

Knowledge Management: The process of capturing, distributing, and effectively using knowledge within an organisation to foster learning, improve decision-making and save institutional memory.

Institutional knowledge: The accumulated understanding, expertise, and information held within an organisation, essential for its ongoing effectiveness and continuity.

Legitimacy: The recognition and acceptance of an organisation or action as appropriate, valid, and justifiable by stakeholders, often based on adherence to laws, norms, and ethical standards.

Member Relationship Management software: Technology tools designed to manage interactions and relationships with current and potential members, enhancing engagement and retention.

Membership Policy: Guidelines that define the criteria, rights, and responsibilities associated with being a member of an organisation or network.

Membership Commitment: The level of engagement and loyalty that members demonstrate towards a network, often involving active participation and support.

Membership Composition: The demographic of a network's members, including diversity factors such as age, gender, race, religion, cast, expertise, etc.

Operations Management: The administration of practices aimed at ensuring maximum efficiency within an organisation, overseeing day-to-day activities. Including facilities management, procurement, information and technology, etc.

Financial Management: The strategic planning, organising, directing, and controlling of financial activities, ensuring the organisation's financial stability and sustainability.

Staff wellbeing: The overall health, happiness, and satisfaction of employees within an organisation, emphasising work-life balance and mental health support.