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FORUS POST-2030 VISION PAPER

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



THE VISION: WHAT WE DEFEND,
DEMAND AND DECLINE



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

With 2030 rapidly approaching, the global debate is increasingly shifting towards what should follow the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

While formal negotiations are expected to begin at the 2027 SDG Summit, informal talks around agenda-setting, coalition-building and political positioning are already underway. These discussions are unfolding in a far more volatile context than the one that enabled the adoption of the SDGs in 2015: geopolitical fragmentation is deepening, civic space is shrinking, development finance is under growing strain, and support for multilateralism and universal norms is increasingly contested.



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→ **24,000**

This paper was developed in partnership with Forus members from across the network representing over 24,000 NGOs.

→ **3**

Presenting three scenarios for how the post-2030 process may evolve

FOR FORUS, THE COMING YEARS REPRESENT A STRATEGIC WINDOW TO INFLUENCE NOT ONLY THE SUBSTANCE OF THE POST-2030 AGENDA, BUT ALSO THE RULES OF THE PROCESS – INCLUDING WHO PARTICIPATES, HOW ACCOUNTABILITY IS STRUCTURED, AND WHAT FINANCING PRINCIPLES UNDERPIN DELIVERY. THIS VISION PAPER SETS OUT FORUS’ COLLECTIVE PRIORITIES FOR SHAPING THE POST-2030 AGENDA.

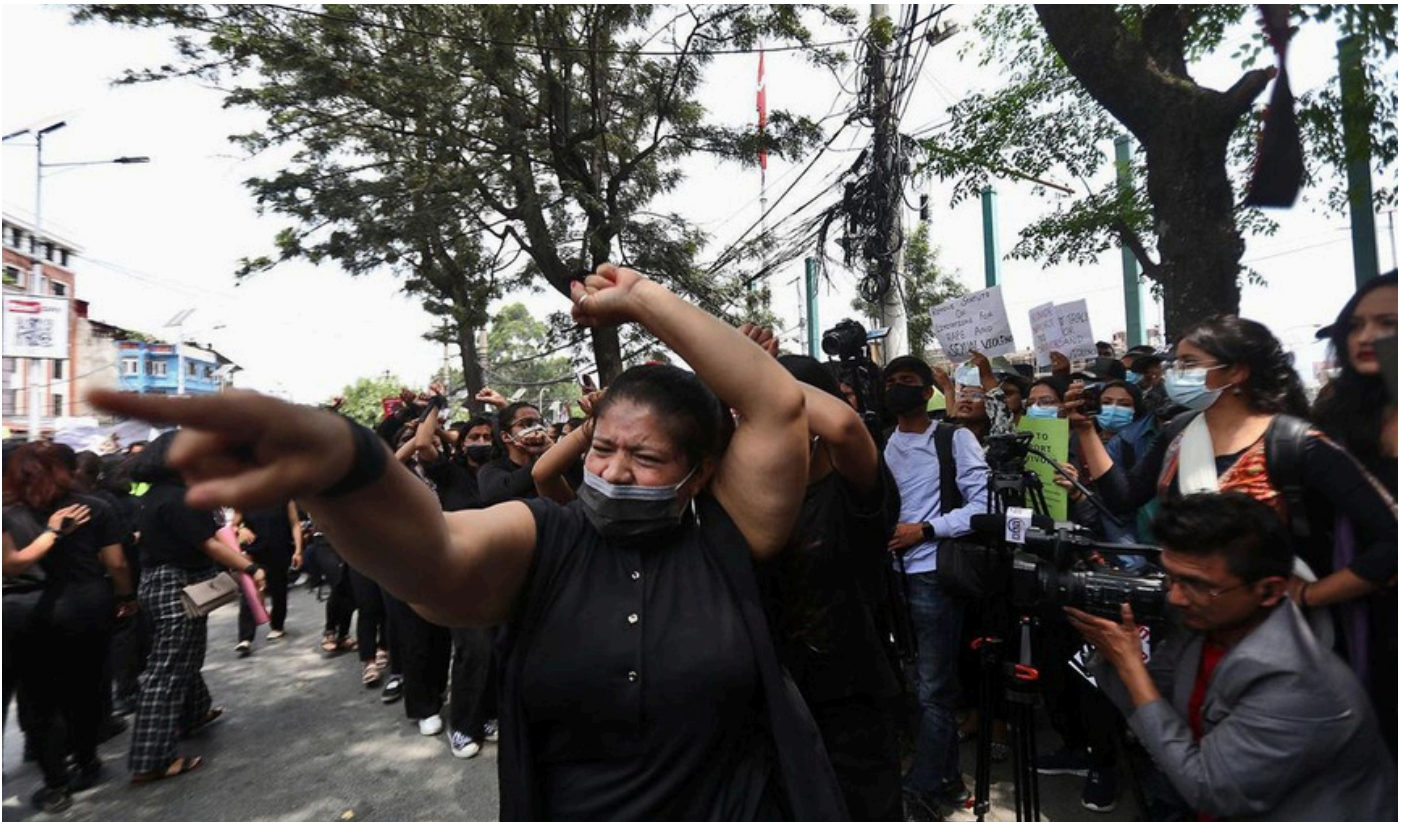


⇒ IT IS NOT ONLY ABOUT WHAT MAY COME AFTER THE SDGS, BUT ABOUT WHAT MUST BE DEFENDED, WHAT MUST BE CORRECTED, AND WHAT MUST NOT BE LOST.

FORUS WILL DEFEND THE UNIVERSAL AND RIGHTS-BASED PROMISE OF THE SDGS, PUSH FOR A FRAMEWORK THAT ADDRESSES THEIR MAJOR SHORTCOMINGS – ESPECIALLY ON FINANCING, ACCOUNTABILITY, LOCALISATION AND CIVIC PARTICIPATION – AND RESIST ANY ATTEMPT TO DILUTE CORE COMMITMENTS FOR POLITICAL EXPEDIENCY.

➔ THE PAPER IDENTIFIES THREE POSSIBLE SCENARIOS FOR HOW THE POST-2030 PROCESS MAY EVOLVE – (CONTINUITY), (RESET) AND (FRAGMENTATION).





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→ Scenarios

The paper identifies three possible scenarios for how the post-2030 process may evolve — continuity, reset and fragmentation — and proposes an approach that remains relevant across all three, while recognising continuity as the most likely baseline and fragmentation as a constant risk.

This approach, however, should not prevent civil society from articulating a more ambitious agenda. Even amid constrained political conditions, forward-looking proposals can shape narrative, open political space and lay the ground for future, deeper reforms, in particular on financing and long-standing structural inequalities.

→ Forus' position

Forus' position is clear: the post-2030 process must not become a vehicle for lowering ambition, weakening rights or shrinking accountability. It must be an opportunity to correct the implementation, financing and participation gaps that have limited the SDGs, while defending their universal and transformative promise.

This Vision Paper has been developed in close consultation with the Forus network as a whole, as well as development experts from the UN, civil society, academia, think-tanks and philanthropy. It reflects regional nuances and a diversity of perspectives, while setting out a way forward that is globally relevant.

THE VISION: WHAT WE DEFEND, DEMAND AND DECLINE

Overall Vision

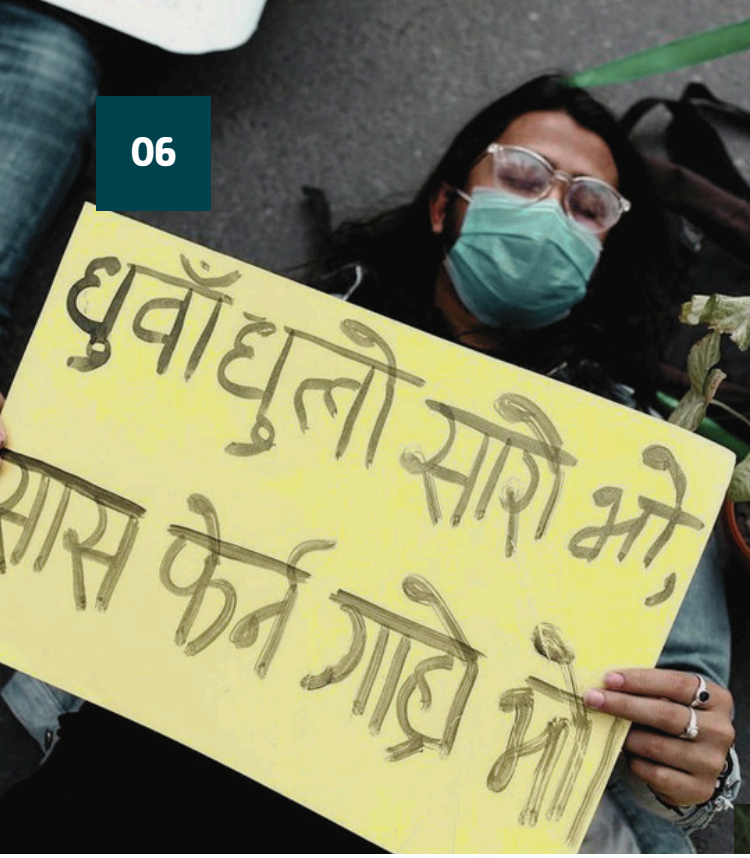
An ambitious post-2030 global development framework rooted in human rights, universality and justice; responsive to today's interconnected crises; backed by credible financing and accountability; and shaped through meaningful civil society participation, with greater power for local actors.

The future framework must therefore preserve the universal and rights-based promise of the SDGs while addressing the weaknesses that limited their implementation. It should place financing reform, accountability, civic space and localisation much more centrally, and ensure that civil society can participate meaningfully and safely in both shaping and monitoring the agenda.

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"[There is a need to] take stock of what is working, why and where."



WHAT WE DEFEND



- The normative gains of the SDG era, including the recognition that sustainable development must integrate social justice, equality, environmental sustainability, peace and human rights.



- Civic space as a public good and an enabling condition for participation, accountability and implementation.



- A universal and rights-based global development agenda that leaves no one behind and protects the dignity, agency and rights of those most exposed to poverty, exclusion, discrimination and crisis.



- A strong and effective multilateral system capable of coordinating collective responses to global challenges and upholding international commitments.



- Local leadership, with real resources, recognition and decision-making power for those actors closest to communities and most directly engaged in delivering change.



WHAT WE DEMAND



- A post-2030 framework that preserves the universal ambition of the SDGs while correcting their major weaknesses — especially on financing, accountability, localisation and implementation.



- A formalised, meaningful and safe role for civil society in both negotiation and implementation, with particular attention to the participation of local actors and groups facing political or structural exclusion.



- A framework better equipped to respond to today's realities, including climate breakdown, democratic erosion, inequality, conflict, and the risks and opportunities created by emerging technologies.



- Financing reform at the centre of the framework, including debt restructuring and relief, more equitable lending terms, increased concessional finance, stronger domestic resource mobilisation, tax justice, policy coherence, and predictable support for civil society.



- A framework that reflects differentiated responsibilities and universal obligations, including the need for high-income countries to transform unsustainable economic, financial and development models and to strengthen policy coherence at home as well as internationally.



- Stronger accountability through mandatory, transparent and regular reporting and review, with independent oversight and a formal role for civil society and local actors in monitoring progress and identifying implementation gaps.

A CREDIBLE POST-2030 AGENDA MUST THEREFORE PRESERVE UNIVERSALITY AND THE COMMITMENT TO LEAVE NO ONE BEHIND; ADDRESS STRUCTURAL INEQUALITIES WITHIN AND BETWEEN COUNTRIES; PLACE FINANCING REFORM AT THE HEART OF IMPLEMENTATION; STRENGTHEN ACCOUNTABILITY THROUGH MANDATORY, TRANSPARENT AND REGULAR REPORTING AND REVIEW, WITH INDEPENDENT OVERSIGHT AND A FORMAL ROLE FOR CIVIL SOCIETY AND LOCAL ACTORS; PROTECT CIVIC SPACE AND MEANINGFUL PARTICIPATION.



→ AND RECOGNISE LOCALISATION, PEACE, RIGHTS AND PUBLIC ACCOUNTABILITY AS ESSENTIAL CONDITIONS FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT.



→ WHAT WE DECLINE

- A watered-down framework that sacrifices universality, a rights-based approach, gender equality, civic freedoms or climate ambition for the sake of political expediency.



- Accountability mechanisms that remain voluntary, selective or performative, without meaningful follow-up, transparency or correction.



- Development governance that expands the role of private or philanthropic actors without clear public-interest safeguards, democratic oversight and accountability.



- The continuation of a financial status quo in which unjust debt arrangements, unequal fiscal space and weak financing commitments undermine implementation and deepen inequality.



- Tokenistic inclusion that brings civil society or local actors into high-level spaces for appearance's sake while excluding them from agenda-setting, decision-making and follow-through.

CONTACT US

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About Forus

→ **Forus** is an innovative global network supporting civil society for effective social change gathering 74 National NGO Platforms and 8 Regional Coalitions, representing over 24,000 NGOs

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