

# FORUT Policy Document

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## **Background**

FORUT originates from the IOGT movement in Norway, which together with other popular movements was an important part of building democracy and people power in Norway from the middle of the 19th century. For these organizations working to prevent harm from alcohol and other drugs was a natural step in the process of liberation of people to live up to their full potential. The tradition of believing in people's power and will to change their situation and society is the bedrock which FORUT stands on today.

## **Vision and Mission**

### **Vision**

FORUT's vision is a peaceful, democratic and just world where everyone is secured human rights and a dignified life, and where alcohol and drugs do not jeopardise people's safety and human potential.

### **Mission**

The mission of FORUT is to mobilise, organise and empower people, especially women and children, to develop their potential. They shall be able to demand their rights and combat poverty, injustice and oppression with democratic and peaceful means. FORUT's goal is that people have the power to change their lives.

## Making a Difference

People power<sup>1</sup> is created when people freely come together to struggle for change and to challenge unjust power structures. Change starts in the minds of people, but it needs to be channelled through collective action and, ultimately, be manifested as changes in political, social, cultural and economic structures. FORUT makes a difference by helping the poor and marginalised achieve their potential for people power, and gives particular importance to empowering women, youth and children to participate in decisions concerning them. FORUT supports them in their struggles to promote and defend their rights and hold governments and other duty-bearers accountable.

FORUT has a rights-based approach rather than a charity approach which would pity the poor and provide services for them. It is a solidarity organisation, working with marginalised groups in their quest for improvements for themselves and their communities and standing with the oppressed in their struggle for dignity, justice and human rights. We believe that communities are resilient and that ordinary people are agents of change, capable of improving their lives. FORUT's role is to support their efforts. It is a privilege to be allowed to do so in the spirit of mutual respect, partnership and learning. In doing so FORUT recognises the need to address political, social and economic inequality at all levels and subscribes to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development as the global framework for doing so.

FORUT is committed to the following values and beliefs:

- Poverty, injustice and oppression are interrelated barriers to living in dignity and fulfilling one's potential. Human rights are universal, inalienable and indivisible and social justice and fundamental freedoms must go hand in hand.
- Participatory democracy and people power are mutually reinforcing and include much more than just the right to vote. In a participatory democracy with good governance authorities are accountable, transparent and responsive to the needs and rights of all.
- Civil society is the most important contributor to participatory democracy and is a much broader concept than NGOs. A vibrant civil society is both a goal in itself and a means to ensure human rights and good governance, through being a watchdog and a partner for governments as well as the private sector.
- Peace is more than the absence of war and violence. A true peace requires just, inclusive and equitable structures to replace unjust, exploitative and oppressive structures. Civil society can only strive for peace with nonviolent means.
- Diversity is a source of strength and makes our lives richer. It is to be promoted, protected and celebrated. Racism, ageism, sexism, tribalism, sectarianism or any other form of discrimination is anathema to FORUT.
- Alcohol and drugs are often barriers to individual and societal development and a cause of ill health, violence, poverty and human rights violations, particularly against women and children. FORUT works to minimise harm from alcohol and drugs.

FORUT is committed to making a difference by supporting civil society initiatives that promote the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by encouraging democratic

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<sup>11</sup>People power is defined in the Theory of Change chapter. In short, when we talk about people power we mean that the ultimate power in a society rests with the people, where they hold their leaders accountable not only through free and fair elections, but also where a vibrant civil society hold their leaders accountable between elections.

participation, defending and promoting human rights, mitigating violent conflict, contributing to the eradication of poverty, injustice and oppression, and preventing alcohol and drug problems.

## The World We Live In

At the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century the world is changing rapidly, for good as well as for bad. The most astounding success is that we have been able to halve extreme poverty and we have made huge strides in securing education and health services for all. In geopolitical terms we are seeing the waning of the unipolar world system dominated by a single superpower and the emergence of a more multipolar world with Asia as a new political and economic centre. At the turn of the last century we lived in a world which was more democratic and less violent than at any time before this century, and this crowned centuries of improvements in human well-being on our planet. However, this is not a time for complacency, because there are other trends that are equally worrying and threaten to undermine the sustainability of our achievements. The root cause of these trends is concentration and monopolisation of power on few hands, and the abuse of this power for their own short-sighted and egoistic gains.

Climate change, loss of biodiversity and overexploitation of natural resources threaten the ecologic stability that our very survival depends on. Our current production and consumption patterns are not sustainable and will lead to ecological collapse if the global economy has not become ecologically sustainable within a few decades. The sustainability of the planet must trump short-term profit and this can only be brought about if sustained pressure from civil society be brought to bear on political and economic leaders.

The long-term trend of reduction in violent conflicts has been reversed, and more people are killed or forced to flee today than ten years ago. This is a serious threat to global security, democracy and development. Two important drivers of conflict at the start of the 21<sup>st</sup> century are on the one hand ideological, primarily violent nationalism and religious extremism, which have risen from the ashes of the fall of fascism and communism, and on the other hand profit-driven such as organised crime (such as e.g. human trafficking, drug trafficking and illegal arms trade), and the symbiosis of crime syndicates, big business and government seen in many parts of the world.

The number of refugees and internally displaced people in the world is higher than any time after the Second World War, and environmental degradation, violent conflict, dictatorship, inequality and poverty all contribute to this. At the same time we see urbanisation which leads to the growth of megacities with large informal sectors where migrants are being exploited and trafficked and where alcohol and drug use is a growing concern.

Democracy has, after decades of progress, been pushed back during the last decade.<sup>2</sup> We are seeing the growth of new forms of authoritarianism which are less overtly violent but as repressive as the dictatorships of the previous century. Political and legal repressive methods result in shrinking space for civil society and reduced media freedom. Economic power and control over media is used to concentrate and cement political power in few hands. Political apathy undermines established democracies and corruption undermines people's ability to improve their conditions and claim their rights. In the marketplace of ideas,

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<sup>2</sup>See for example Freedom House' annual Freedom in the World reports, CIVICUS' reports on "shrinking space" for civil society. See also the article "Is Democracy in Decline?" in Journal of Democracy, January 2015.

nationalism, sectarianism and other exclusivist ideologies are gaining ground against universal norms based on equal rights and equal value for all humans.

The reduction in global inequalities<sup>3</sup> has gone hand in hand with an increase in national and local inequalities<sup>4</sup>. We see massive concentration of economic resources in the hands of fewer people, and almost half of the world's wealth is now owned by the richest 1 % of the population. Concentration of power and increasing economic disparities undermine the achievements in human rights and poverty reduction as well as the stability of societies. Disparities in socio-economic conditions also result in inequalities in health. Money is power, and when wealth is concentrated in fewer hands, so is political power. It will inevitably be used to extract even more resources from the poor and the natural environment to the benefit of the already powerful – whether the powerful are autocrats in over-centralised societies, private-sector multi-billionaires, alcohol industry corporations, local warlords in anarchic societies – or a combination of the above.

The global health picture is changing. Some poverty-related diseases are being gradually reduced. At the same time new health challenges are emerging. Many countries witness a dramatic increase in non-communicable diseases (NCDs) like cardiovascular diseases, cancers, chronic respiratory diseases and diabetes. These so-called industrial epidemics are caused by four shared risk factors: alcohol, tobacco, unhealthy food and lack of physical activity, all but the last related to consumption of commercial products. This trend is also observed in developing countries, in particular those countries that have become middle-income countries with a growing middle-class. It is estimated that 80 % of deaths from NCDs occur in developing countries. The NCDs come on top of the poverty-related diseases creating a double disease-burden in a many countries in the global South.

Among the driving forces behind the increasing use of alcohol and its related harm are the commercial interests that control the production and sale of alcohol. The global alcohol market is dominated by a handful of large corporations. While alcohol consumption in western countries has stabilized or declined recent years, these corporations have increased their pressure on new markets in Asia and Africa. These are countries which has a considerable part of the population that does not drink and where drinking, especially among woman, has not been a daily norm. These countries have few preventative policies in place and the corporations also act as political actors seeking to increase alcohol sales. The pressure for legalizing narcotics drugs are also increasing globally.

These trends affect all FORUT programme countries. In all of them, the two largest groups experiencing discrimination and marginalisation are women and children. Together they account for about 2/3 of the world population, but their rights are systematically denied. This is not a coincidence, but a result of oppressive cultures and structures created and maintained by adult men in power, and by the relative powerlessness of women and children

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<sup>3</sup>Wikipedia: "According to current research, global income inequality peaked approximately in the 1970s when world income was distributed bimodally into "rich" and "poor" countries with little overlap. Since then inequality have been rapidly decreasing, and this trend seems to be accelerating. Income distribution is now unimodal, with most people living in middle-income countries."

<sup>4</sup> Credit Suisse Global Wealth Report 2014: "Our findings suggest that wealth inequality fell slightly in many countries before the financial crisis, but has tended to rise since 2008, especially in the developing world."

in spite of tremendous achievements in the fight against sexism and ageism the last 100 years.

If the global trends outline above are allowed to develop unchecked, the world in 2030 will be a place where environmental degradation, violent conflicts, authoritarianism and inequality have reversed the gains we have made. However, this is far from inevitable and the SDGs and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development creates a vision of another possible world. Truly transformative change in power structures from the local to the global level is possible. History has taught us that ordinary citizens have the potential to hold governments and corporations accountable and that power can be diffused throughout society so that no group can dominate another. If we can make this happen, we will be able to return to the long-term trend of improvement in human well-being and the SDGs will be achievable.

Ordinary people claiming their rights have successfully challenged the powerful and ended slavery (in its traditional form), ousted dictators, empowered women and children and ended wars. It can and will happen again, but never without a struggle. The powers that be are not likely to give up power and privilege without a fight. However, globalisation of communication has given civil society a new potential for global networks and partnerships to be used to empower the marginalised. Therefore, civil society will be able to wage conflict against the uncivil aspects of our societies by building alliances and partnerships – vertically from the local to the global level and horizontally between all segments of society. It can challenge the forces that seek to exploit the powerless, build alliances with likeminded forces, and ensure that past achievements are consolidated so that every global citizen can enjoy them in the future.



## **FORUT's Theory of Change**

FORUT can make a difference, and our theory on how we can do so is based on:

- Participatory democracy and human rights as core values and principles,
- The concept of people power as both our end and our means,
- Sustainable, generational change by empowering women, youth and children and engaging men in support of this,
- The SDGs and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development as an overarching framework for sustainable change
- Equitable partnerships at all levels, and
- The synergies that can be achieved by working jointly on child rights, gender empowerment and alcohol, drugs and development.

FORUT's ToC is constructed on the premise that if we support initiatives to encourage local ownership and bottom-up approaches to development, we will often be able to release and channel people power to make governments and corporations accountable to the people and their rights and needs.

## **People Power and Participatory Democracy**

One traditional view of power in a society is that it is concentrated on the top and flows downward through a hierarchical system: what the leader(s) decided today becomes reality tomorrow. The true nature of political power, however, is very different. Ultimately, the power of the ruler(s) comes from people's consent: the moment enough people withdraw it, the ruler(s) are powerless. This is people power, which has been institutionalised in the concept of liberal democracy. In liberal democracies the ultimate power rests with the people, who elect their leaders through free and fair elections and the leaders' power is restricted by the rule of law and separation of powers. Participatory democracy, however, goes even further, because it emphasises the importance of all that goes on between elections. In a participatory democracy, the people hold the politicians and civil servants accountable every day through an empowered and vibrant civil society. Hence, participatory democracy is the joining of liberal democracy and people power in a symbiotic relationship.

People power has toppled dictatorships, ended wars and foreign occupations, thwarted attempted coup d'états, ended apartheid and segregation, but its power is not limited to these pivotal events. People power is used every day, in every society, to advance human rights, to protect the environment, to promote the rights of indigenous peoples, to fight corruption and to change the structures that create and reinforce poverty. Whereas there are strong tendencies towards centralisation of political and economic power in the state and the private sector, people power resides in civil society (which ideally is controlled neither by the state nor capital), and ideally seeks to diffuse power among ordinary people, so they can hold state and capital accountable.

Civil society must not be confused with NGOs, although it includes them. It is a web of formal and informal relations – ranging from families through local informal networks to national and international mass movements and religions – where people organise themselves and act together in their common interests. Strengthening civil society, or increasing the space for civil society, is therefore at its most fundamental level to ensure that there is a large domain

of people's lives which is not dominated by the state nor by the market, but where people can mobilise, organise, and empower themselves, based not on a desire to accumulate power or profit, but to create a better life for themselves and their compatriots, based on ideas of solidarity, justice, freedom and equality. Participatory democracy therefore depends on a vibrant, pluralistic civil society in order to thrive and survive.

The idea of people power does, however, not assume that civil society is always good, or that governments and private corporations are always bad. Quite on the contrary, there are uncivil elements of civil society, and uncivil elements of civil society can work together with abusive and undemocratic governments. Many landmark achievements of human progress have been achieved when civil society has co-operated with progressive elements of the state and/or the private sector. People power is maximised when civil society is built on openness and transparency, when it knows when to work with public and private sector interests, when to be a critical watchdog and when to mobilise people power against abusive power holders. Efforts are mobilised at local, national, regional and global level, always non-violently and in accordance with International Law.

The role of FORUT and its partners will often be to release and channel potential people power. Poor and marginalised people often feel powerless because they are not aware of their potential for people power or how to channel it to get political influence. FORUT will engage with civil society to promote development, human rights, peace and the prevention of alcohol and drug problems. FORUT can support awareness-raising, mobilisation and organising, build their capacity to form and sustain civil society networks that increase their power, and help create an enabling environment to increase space for civil society. Only when this enables them to initiate and sustain collective action to successfully improve their lives and claim their rights have we succeeded in releasing their potential for people power and achieved our end: democratic, just and inclusive societies where people have the power, their elected leaders are accountable to them and the market forces have been harnessed to provide goods, services and jobs that people need.

### **Equitable partnerships**

Civil society is based on the concept of voluntary association and co-operation. The foundation of voluntary association is equitable partnership where the aim is interdependency based on mutual respect, trust, accountability and transparency. By extension, when civil society entities enter into partnerships or co-operation agreements with the state or the private sector, it must be based on the same principle of equity: people-empowered civil society must never allow itself to be dominated by others nor try to dominate others.

Equitable partnerships are exceedingly difficult to sustain where the relationships are based on unequal power, whether it is caused by unequal access to resources, knowledge, skills or other sources of power. This may be the case in the partnerships between FORUT and its donors, FORUT and its partner organisations and the partner organisations and their constituencies and other stakeholders. This challenge must be recognised as fundamental, and efforts must continuously be made to reduce power differences and to promote equity in spite of the differences that exist.

In order to promote this equity there are some principles that should be adhered to in all partnership relations:

- *Local ownership and bottom-up approaches.* Top-down approaches are incompatible with promoting people power. The drive for change must come from the Global South, and be locally driven, and FORUT's role must be supportive.
- *Decentralised and democratic decision-making.* Decisions should be taken as locally as possible, and when it is not possible, decisions need to be taken based on broad consultation and participation.
- *Transparency and information-sharing.* In equitable partnerships trust and respect are built by open sharing of information and mutual accountability. Accountability to donors is necessary, but accountability to the people who are primary stakeholders must always be paramount. We must be models for good governance.
- *Mutual learning and support.* The idea that FORUT as a northern NGO should add value to its southern partners and the primary stakeholders in a unidirectional process is outdated and condescending. Equitable partnership means that exchange of learning, support and best practices is multi-directional, and we all learn from each other, adding value to our joint endeavours.
- *Practice servant leadership.* The servant leader is servant first, leader second and makes sure that other people's needs are being served. This means that the paramount concern is the rights and well-being of the people whom FORUT and its partners work to empower.
- *Clarity of roles, responsibilities and relationships.* These are necessary guidelines to achieve good working relationships among partners.

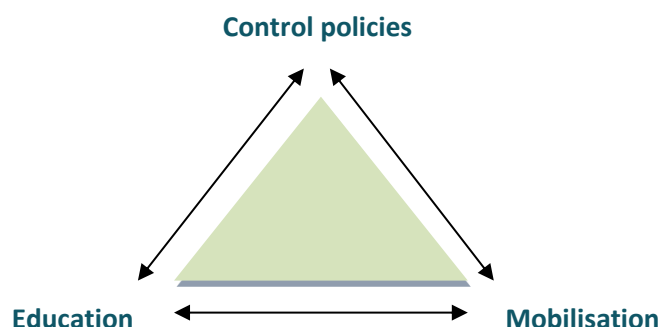
Equitable partnerships enable us to go local, but remain global. Through equitable partnerships we protect the space for civil society at all levels by contributing to strengthening civil society and building networks of like-minded actors from the local to the global level. Equitable partnerships is therefore our response to globalisation of politics, business and information, it is the means through which people power is also globalised, in order to hold government and business transparent and accountable, from the local to the global level.

## **ADD, CR & GE**

### **Alcohol, Drugs & Development (ADD)**

Increased alcohol consumption is an impediment to development as social problems and poverty are exacerbated by alcohol use, and in many cases also a symptom of frustration and perceived powerlessness. Such use has a detrimental effect on families, communities and the health of individuals. The Global Burden of Disease study 2010 has identified alcohol as the fifth leading risk factor for ill health and early death globally. An increasing volume of research shows that use of alcohol is a risk factor to offset progress on several of the most important development challenges: poverty reduction, prevention of HIV/AIDS, reduction in gender-based violence, and promotion of gender equity and child rights among others.

According to WHO<sup>5</sup>, 48 % of the world's population have never consumed alcohol. Furthermore, 14 % have consumed alcohol earlier in life, but not during the past year. Two thirds of all women have abstained from drinking alcohol in the past 12 months and almost half of all men. Halting the increase in the number of alcohol users in a country as well as the per capita consumption of alcohol, and preferably reducing it, will have beneficial development effects. The theory of collectivity of drinking cultures says that alcohol consumption is a social phenomenon and that there is mutual influence between individuals. Individual drinking behavior is not determined as an isolated entity, but as a part of a larger collective network. Strong scientific evidence indicates that cost effective measures exist and these include regulating the price of alcohol through taxation, limiting availability of alcohol and restrict marketing. Furthermore, scientific evidence indicates that these interventions are effective across cultures, drinking patterns and level of economic development. The variation in context may be substantial. However, one issue usually remains the same: most developing countries have very weak alcohol policies, if any at all. Existing legislation is often outdated and/or not effectively enforced. In 2010 the Member States of WHO endorsed its “*Global strategy to reduce the harmful use of alcohol*”. The strategy is based on strong research evidence about cost effective interventions and recommends a number of specific measures to reduce harm from alcohol. In 2011 alcohol was identified as one of the shared risk factors for the epidemic of Non-communicable diseases discussed by world leaders at a UN summit. Another UN summit in 2015 adopted the Sustainable Development Goals which include a target to address alcohol and drug problems.



The increase in alcohol related harm following economic development requires a comprehensive and evidence-based approach to reduce the harm; illustrated by a model we call “The prevention triangle”. Each corner in the triangle represents one approach to prevention, but implemented together these measures will have greater effect.

*Control policies* are regulation of markets by governments to reduce the accessibility of a product and to guarantee the safest possible production, marketing and distribution of alcohol. These policies are normally the mandate of the national level, while the implementation of regulations often is delegated to local authorities. National alcohol policies should be based on WHO’s Global Strategy.

*Education* is to provide factual information and skills to people to influence their knowledge and values to change attitudes and behaviour. Education includes educating politicians and decisions makers about the harm from alcohol and the potential for preventing harm. Educational methods are also used to explain and rally support for government regulations.

*Mobilisation* may be in the form of communities getting together to address problems locally or various NGOs advocating for governments to adequately address harm from alcohol. Alcohol prevention and mitigation strategies can be made part of the agenda for

<sup>5</sup> [http://www.who.int/gho/alcohol/consumption\\_patterns/abstainers/en/](http://www.who.int/gho/alcohol/consumption_patterns/abstainers/en/)

social/political movements, and it can be used to link alcohol harm prevention and mitigation with other relevant policy issues.

FORUT's strategies with regards to the prevention triangle are *advocacy* in order to improve control policies, *capacity building* to educate stakeholders with regards to these issues and *empowerment* to mobilise communities. FORUT's work on ADD is also vertically integrated, from global advocacy to local interventions, via national advocacy. Each element of these efforts will reinforce the others. Experience from the local and national levels will strengthen global advocacy and knowledge about and from the global context will strengthen national and local work.

### Child Rights (CR)

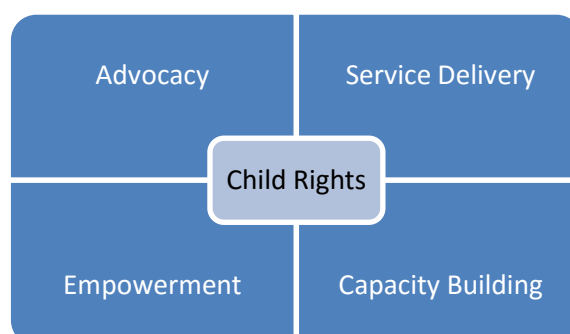
About 1/3 of the world population are children (<18 years), and in FORUT's programme countries, the percentage vary from about 55% (Zambia) to about 30% (Sri Lanka). In spite of significant progress made in access to education, child mortality, child labour and other important areas, the rights of millions of children are still systematically violated 25 years after the UN adopted the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC). Girl children are particularly vulnerable, as sexual abuse and trafficking, "honour killings", early marriage and female genital mutilation remain prevalent in large parts of the world and they are often neglected and deprived of their fundamental rights. A comprehensive strategy to protection of children requires not only reactions against violations of their rights, but preventive measures that address the root causes of all forms of violence against them.

FORUT does, however, not see children only as potential victims in need of protection, but also as capable of articulating their needs and participate in decisions affecting themselves their peers and their communities. Given the chance, they can be their own change agents and problem-solvers, but they need support from adults to be able to defend their own interests and rights. Their right to take part in decisions affecting them is enshrined in the CRC and FORUT works to empower children to claim and make use of this right.

The challenges and potentials facing children do not magically disappear at the age of 18 when they formally become adults. Quite on the contrary, many of the same challenges persist for young adults. Youth are therefore also a priority target group for FORUT and its partners, and we work to protect youth at risk, to enable the smooth transition of children to adult life and with youth as changemakers.<sup>6</sup>

In order to ensure protection and participation of children, FORUT uses the same three strategic interventions as for ADD, plus service delivery as a fourth strategy.

*Advocacy* aims at promoting child rights and child friendly policies at the local, regional, national and international level. Sometimes this included promoting new legislation and policies, but often it aims to ensure effective implementation of existing policies. The state has the primary responsibility to ensure child rights and must be held accountable. The ultimate aim is to transform political, economic,



<sup>6</sup>Since children are defined as <18 years of age and youth as 15-24 years of age, there is also an overlap between the two groups. People aged 15-17 are both children and youth.

cultural and cognitive structures and values that systematically discriminate children and subject them to marginalisation and discrimination.

*Service delivery* is primarily the responsibility of the state as a duty bearer, but where the state is unable or unwilling to deliver services needed to ensure child rights, FORUT and its partners will use service delivery strategically as a door-opener to induce authorities to improve their performance in the area, for example through demonstrating best practices and establishing mutual partnerships with government institutions. Our service delivery focuses on protection of the most vulnerable children from exploitation and harm, ensuring their right and access to high-quality health service, education and vocational training, and protecting them from harm from alcohol and drugs while not treating children under 18 as criminals for use of alcohol and drugs.

*Empowerment* aims at organising children and enables them to be their own spokespersons, and to organise adults to support them in their endeavours. FORUT and its partners will often function as facilitators to ensure children's access to decision-makers so their voices are heard. While each child has a right to take part in decisions that affect him/her, the effect is multiplied when children are organised and fighting together for their right. Child power is therefore an integrated and inseparable part of people power.

*Capacity-building* aims at enabling public institutions and civil society to do a better job at protecting and promoting CR, and to improve their co-operation towards this end. It involves informing stakeholders about the rights of children, training them in how CR can be protected and promoted, on the roles of different stakeholders and how they can work together to improve CR. This requires building of institutional capacity, not only the capacity of individuals.

### Gender Equality (GE)

Discrimination and marginalisation of women is the most systematic and widespread form of oppression in almost all societies and cultures and is as old as humanity itself. In spite of significant progress having been made during the last century, the structures of oppression persist: in legislation, politics, the economy and the family, and the last couple of decades we have seen powerful forces pushing back against the tide of women's emancipation.

Empowerment of women and girls is key to achieving a world where men and women are equals. This is a better world for all than a world dominated by sexism and patriarchal structures. GE is necessary to achieve all other development goals, and empowering half the world to be the equals of the other half must be the highest priority for the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Hence, GE is not just a crosscutting issue for FORUT, but one of its three priority areas. Mainstreaming gender should involve bringing the contribution, perspectives and priorities of both women and men to the centre of attention in the development arena in order to inform the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic and societal spheres so that women and men benefit equally and inequality is not perpetuated. Within GE, FORUT has chosen to focus on three sub-areas that are critical to achieving our goals:

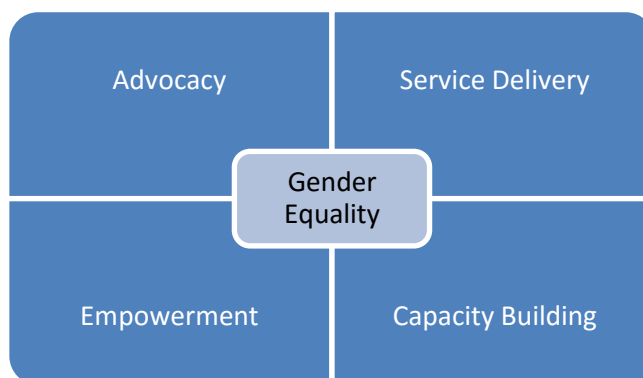
1. *Economic and political empowerment* of women because access to political and economic power is a precondition for GE in general and are the two areas where discrimination of women is most persistent in all societies.



2. The fight against *Gender-Based Violence* (GBV) because GBV is a crime against humanity and as long as it persists, GE is rendered void and meaningless.
3. *Women's health*, including reproductive/sexual health and maternal health, because control of one's own body and equal access to health services is a precondition for GE and children's health.

In the area of GE, FORUT uses a model identical to the CR model, where advocacy, service delivery, empowerment and capacity building interact to promote GE.

*Advocacy* efforts aim at replacing sexist and discriminatory legislation and policies with policies promoting gender equality, and improving implementation of such policies, from the local to the international level. Advocacy efforts are usually most effective when channelled through broad alliances of civil society and other political forces, and the forging and strengthening of such alliances is a priority for FORUT and its partners.



*Service delivery* is also here used strategically to establish partnerships with public authorities and to fill gaps in the government's service delivery. Access to basic health services and reprieve against GBV are priorities for service delivery.

*Empowerment* of women and men for women's rights and gender equality is an area where people power has great potential because gender relations involve us all and we can all be mobilised to fight for GE. FORUT and its partner seek to organise local groups and communities – both men and women – to hold authorities accountable for women's access to public services; to assist women in improving their livelihoods; to protect against GBV and help victims of GBV access justice; and to change traditional and cultural values that perpetuate patriarchy and disenfranchise women. We also see that women's groups in many countries have been an important part of mobilising against alcohol consumption and harm.

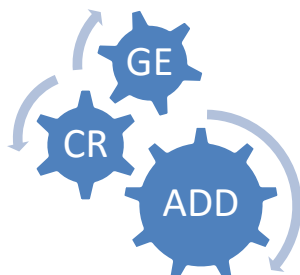
*Capacity building* of public institutions and civil society is a crucial factor in achieving GE. It is needed to make the effects of the three other strategies sustainable over time. It enables the duty-bearers to carry out the responsibilities with regard to GE and the civil society to hold them accountable while maintaining cordial and trustful relations with policy-makers and public institutions.

### Integration of ADD, CR and GE

Some of the causalities between ADD, CR and GE are well known. In particular this is the case with regard to how alcohol and drug problems directly have a negative impact on GE and CR. Alcohol is closely associated with GBV and sexual risk behaviour. Furthermore, when a large part of a poor family's income is spent on alcohol and drugs less is available for education, health and nutrition for women and children.

It is also well-known that when child rights are being violated, children at risk will often indulge in substance use. FORUT partners have documented high levels of use problems among such children, in particular, but not only, in urban slums. This again may lead to violence and sexual exploitation of children, in a vicious circle.

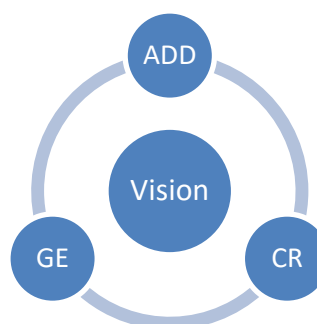
Similarly we see that when women's rights are being violated, this reduces their ability to care for their children, leading to child rights violations. It is also seen that in households where women's rights are violated, child rights are often violated, too – for example where corporal punishment is socially accepted, or FGM is perpetuated through the generations. Last, but not least, girl children are extra vulnerable due to the accumulated effect of ageism and sexism, and an integrated approach is required to secure their rights.



We therefore see that the areas of CR, GE and ADD are intimately interconnected, where shortcomings in one area affect the other areas, in vicious circles.

FORUT believes that when the problems are interconnected we need an integrated approach to solving the problems as well. The vicious interconnected circles of the three areas would have to be replaced by positive effects that mutually reinforce each other, as more respect for child rights and women's rights would go hand in hand with reduction in alcohol and drug problems – at individual, family and community level.

FORUT therefore believes that its long-term vision can be achieved through an integrated approach where the three areas of CR, GE and ADD mutually reinforce each other and where the causal effects go in all directions. The integration is necessary at the following levels:



1. *Conceptual level:* A technical description of the linkages between the three themes.
2. *Intentional level:* Recognition of the inter-linkages between the three issues and intention to address the issues in an integrated manner.
3. *Policy level:* In policy documents on one of the three issues texts should be inserted which describe how the three are interlinked.
4. *Programme level:* Inclusion of programme elements from the two other thematic areas when new programmes in one of the areas are developed or re-designed.
5. *Administrative level:* Organisational structures and staff job description are designed to ensure integration of the three areas.

At the same time as the three areas are horizontally integrated, there is a vertical integration of work at several levels: local, regional, national and international. At the international level, the focus is on advocating for global alcohol policies that can be used as a basis for national level advocacy for alcohol policies and regional and local level focus on implementation of policies. At the national, regional and local level, advocacy is supplemented by three other





strategies: capacity-building, empowerment and service delivery. Capacity-building is particularly important with regard to public institutions and civil society and enables them to become better at what they are doing, but also to do better things. It also provides opportunities for building trust and collaboration between the public sector and civil society. Empowerment is particularly

important with regard to rights-holders and civil society. It is a complex process incorporating aimed at giving people motivation, competence and capacity to assert their rights and develop their potential, individually and collectively. Empowerment is a social vaccination against injustice, oppression and exploitation and strengthens the watchdog-function of civil society. Service delivery is particularly important with regard to vulnerable rights-holders who do not have access to the protection and public services they have a right to. It should be used strategically to gain access to both duty-bearers and rights-holders, and to promote new models of delivery that are people-centred and rights-centred.

Change may occur in four dimensions, and sustainable change requires the change processes in each dimension to support each other in order to achieving our vision.

- Individual change is about personal transformation and empowerment so people have the competence, capacity and motivation to improve their lives
- Relationship change is about transforming relationships so the communities are mobilised and trust built between rights-holders, duty-bearers and civil society
- Cultural change is about transforming collective patterns of thinking and acting so that they reinforce human rights, participatory democracy, equity and solidarity
- Institutional change is about transforming structures, processes and mechanisms so that power has been redistributed and duty-bearers are held accountable

In order to contribute to sustainable change in the four dimensions, FORUT chooses to work primarily with five main groups of stakeholders. Two of the groups are the most important duty-bearers in society. The first consists of political policy-makers, and the second group of public institutions which are responsible for implementing laws and policies. The third group consists of the rights-holders and within this group FORUT focuses on sub-groups that are often at risk of having their rights violated and who are often excluded and marginalised from political and economic processes. The two last groups belong to civil society. The fourth group include traditional media channels as well as various types of role-models and opinion-leaders. The fifth group consists of more formal institutions and entities in civil society.

See page 19 for a visual presentation of this Theory of Change.

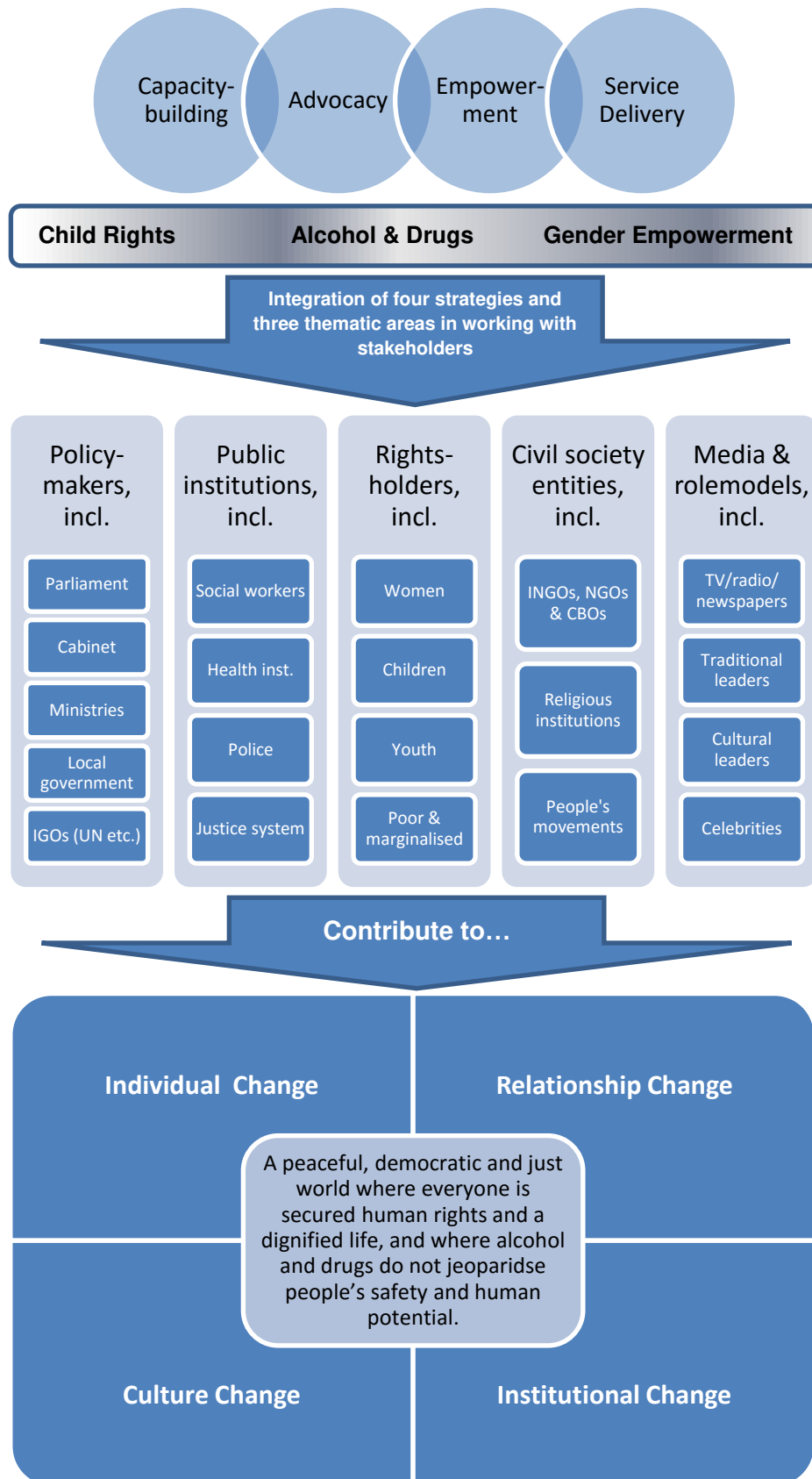
### *“Happy Family Concept” – an example of an integrated approach*

The “Happy Family Concept” targets the individual level where fathers, mothers and children were sensitised about child rights and gender equality in a positive, non-blaming way through visioning of the relationships children would like to have with their parents, including ADD

issues. This is combined with particular work among men on “masculinities”, challenging gender stereotypes and traditional social pressure on how men should behave through analysing and addressing root causes of GBV.

At local society level, children are organised in child clubs, where they are empowered and capacitated on child rights issues – they learn not only which rights they have but also which government institutions, and individuals at the local levels, are the duty bearers responsible for upholding these rights. At the same time, adults are organised in Village Action Teams, responsible for acting when child rights are violated so that the child clubs do not have to stand alone.

At local, district and central levels, the concept seeks to partner with government institution to hold them responsible and to multiply the results of the interventions. This has been done in a way which is not “blaming and shaming”, but by offering constructive partnerships where authorities see that they get practical benefits from it.



## Advocacy and awareness-raising in Norway

FORUT works to influence the Norwegian public opinion and decision-makers on issues pertaining to our three thematic areas, building on our efforts in development education since our inception. Our work towards the general public is what we call awareness-raising, while our work towards decision-makers is what we call advocacy.

### Awareness-raising

The main goal FORUT's work on awareness-raising is to enhance people's awareness of relevant global issues in order to create public involvement in and support for FORUT's mission. Our awareness-raising work will contribute knowledge and insight about the global challenges we are facing, creating social and political commitment. Awareness-raising can start at an early age. Kindergartens and schools are FORUT's main targets in this work.

The more specific objectives for FORUT's work on awareness-raising are:

- Contribute to a high level of knowledge and awareness in the Norwegian public on global developmental issues, in particular our three thematic areas ADD, CR and GE and FORUT's programme countries.
- Ensure that our partners in the South and their constituencies among the poor and marginalised are given a voice in the Norwegian public discourse and mobilise the Norwegian public in support of political campaigns by FORUT's partners.
- Contribute to a high level of public support to international solidarity, inter-cultural understanding, sustainable development, human rights, participatory democracy and global health issues.

### Advocacy

The main goal of FORUT's work on advocacy is to ensure that the policies of the Norwegian government support the SDGs and promote FORUT's mission. Our general advocacy work will help inform decision-makers on global issues and the complexities of development policy as well as the political and economic realities in FORUT's programme countries and communities. Our political campaigns will put pressure on them to adopt and implement specific policies and decisions that support the work of FORUT and our partners.

The more specific objectives for FORUT's advocacy work are:

- Ensure that Norway has global health, CR and GE as priority areas in the development policies and that Norway is in the forefront with regard to ADD issues.
- Ensure that ADD-issues are being incorporated in all important and relevant documents and plans by Norwegian policy-makers
- Ensure that Norway maintains a high level of development assistance and that it is being used to the greatest possible effect, and that Norwegian international policies are coherently working towards a more just and equitable world.
- Ensure that the voices of our partners and their constituencies are heard by Norwegian policy-makers and that Norwegian policies support their campaigns whenever possible.

Advocacy and awareness-raising in Norway should be used strategically to support our development interventions in the South and to support that advocacy and awareness-raising work of our partners in the programme countries.

## Cross-cutting issues and approaches

### Introduction

Cross-cutting issues and approaches are those that are relevant for (almost) all development programmes, and therefore need to be taking into account regardless of the thematic area of a single programme or project. The three thematic areas (ADD, CR and GE) will be cross-cutting issues for programmes and projects that do not focus on that particular thematic area, but since these three areas are dealt with in detail previously they are not repeated here.

The following cross-cutting issues and approaches are of particularly high priority for FORUT and its partners:

### The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the SDGs

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development with its 17 SDGs that were adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 2015 provides a comprehensive agenda for change which cuts across all thematic areas and approaches. All of the 17 SDGs and its sub-targets are relevant for the work of FORUT and its partners, but FORUT will put particular emphasis on contributing the achieving the following SDGs:

- *SDG 1*: End poverty in all its forms everywhere.
- *SDG 2*: End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture.
- *SDG 3*: Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages.
- *SDG 4*: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.
- *SDG 5*: Achieve gender equality and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all
- *SDG 10*: Reduce inequality within and among countries.
- *SDG 11*: Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable
- *SDG 16*: Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.
- *SDG 17*: Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalise the global partnership for sustainable development.

### Participatory democracy and social and political inclusion

Democracy is a system for resolving different interests and allocating resources in society according to predetermined rules and without resorting to violence. However, even if every man and woman has one vote, power and resources more often than not determines the outcome of the process. Vested interest monopolise politics and the majority of the voters are excluded from political process and feel alienated. Without broad-based public participation between elections, democracy becomes only an empty shell, a façade for oligarchic rule.

FORUT sees participatory democracy, where people are actively involved in all important decisions concerning them, as the antidote to oligarchy. All our programmes and projects are designed with a view to broadening and deepening democracy by promoting public participation in political processes and ensuring that marginalised groups are given voice and

heard. This requires political decentralisation, economic justice, access to information and a culture of inclusiveness.

FORUT will always work against marginalisation based on sex, age, nationality, religion, language, caste, disability, sexual orientation or any other personal or collective trait used as excuse for excluding people from political process and social and cultural life. FORUT will always work to create and strengthen mechanisms of government responsiveness to concerned citizens and empower citizens to struggle for their interests. An inclusive participatory democracy is open for all citizens all days a year.

### **Human rights and rights-based approaches**

Human rights are the international legal expressions of the necessary conditions that must be met if all humans are to have their needs met and live a dignified life. These needs are not contingent upon culture, age or sex; they are embedded in what it is to be human. Human rights are therefore universal, inalienable and indivisible; they are both a legal framework and a philosophical value base to which FORUT subscribes. A rights-based approach to development recognises this duality and it focuses on enabling every human being (“right-holders”) to hold governments and others (“duty-bearers”) responsible for ensuring that rights are respected and ensured.

Empowerment is thus the backbone of a rights-based approach, and FORUT recognises that need to work with both right-holders and duty-bearers to achieve this. FORUT supports and works according to the international conventions on human rights, of which the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women are the most important for us. International law serves to legitimise our work as well as providing us with tools for empowering civil society in general and vulnerable groups in particular in voicing their demands for human rights.

### **Good governance, transparency and accountability**

Good governance is the key to sustainable development and social justice, and corruption is its most dangerous foe. Corruption and kleptocracy breeds poverty, violence and oppression and undermines the trust between citizens and between citizen and state which is crucial to social and economic development. The greatest asset any society can have is not oil, diamonds or gold, but a government of, by and for the people which is inclusive, transparent and accountable, provides security and social services to all, enforces the rule of law for all and ensures political, economic and social participation by all. Only thus can all citizens realise their own potential and contribute to the economic and social development of the nation.

FORUT recognises the need to combine bottom-up and top-down approaches to combatting corruption and promoting good governance, but focuses on bottom-up approaches in its work. We are convinced that nothing is more important than informed and empowered citizens in holding politicians and civil servants accountable and that the effectiveness of any national auditor or anti-corruption commission is contingent on public support and media exposure of wrongdoings. FORUT works with local and national authorities to increase their capacity for good governance and willingness to be transparent and accountable, and with civil society and the media to enable them to expose corruption and take action against it.

### **Peace, reconciliation and conflict sensitivity**

War and development are anathema: there can be no sustainable development in a situation dominated by violent conflict. The promotion of peace and reconciliation in areas witnessing violent conflict or in danger of seeing it is therefore of crucial importance to achieving development, combatting poverty and ensuring human rights. Conflict sensitivity is equally important, it means that our development interventions must not worsen conflict or increase the risk of eruption of violence, as coined in the catchphrase “Do No Harm”.

Fighting for the rights of the oppressed, impoverished and marginalised necessarily involves challenging existing privileges and power structures and will therefore increase conflict or awaken dormant conflicts, which runs the risk of leading to violence. Our partners and local activists may choose to expose themselves to risk of violence by standing up for human rights. To minimise these risks FORUT follows a strictly nonviolent approach and use our international network to support our local partners when needed. We also use every opportunity to promote peace and reconciliation at part of our work.

### **Environmental protection and sustainability**

All human activity impacts on the environment, and although the focus at the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century is on climate change, this is closely interconnected with concerns of overpopulation, biodiversity loss, energy use, natural resource depletion, freshwater management, deforestation, overfishing and pollution of air, water and soil. The bottom line is that ecosystem preservation is complex and that systemic and generational changes are necessary to ensure our survival from the local to the global level.

FORUT's main contribution to environmental sustainability is to minimise the negative impact of our work by using renewable and local products whenever possible and promoting energy efficiency and sustainable agriculture. FORUT also works to raise awareness of environmental issues among stakeholders and promote eco-friendly behaviour among our target groups, in particular children. FORUT also supports local communities/governments to develop sustainable development and local governments (to address climate change issues).

### **Community ownership and sustainable change**

Local ownership of processes and products is the key to sustainable change. Community ownership is distinctly different from charity, prevents dependency of aid, and ensures greater relevance and adaptation to cultural context. It goes hand in hand with participatory democracy, good governance, rights-based approach, social accountability and equitable partnerships. Bottom-up approaches ensure that communities are mobilised based on indigenous knowledge priorities, rather than priorities set by elites or by the global north. Changes achieved in this way may be sustained over time, because empowered individuals and communities continue to claim their rights after external support has been withdrawn.

FORUT wants to be a catalyst, strengthening people's faith in their own power and capabilities. Aid cannot solve problems, but can start a process of problem-solving. We will release the inherent local potential instead of coming in and doing the job. Only the people themselves can genuinely achieve their own liberation and development, and FORUT must assist rather than try to take the lead. FORUT will contribute to capacity building and



strengthening of communities and institutions involved aiming at becoming superfluous in the long run.

### **Disaster preparedness and the humanitarian imperative**

FORUT is a rights-based solidarity organisation, not a humanitarian agency. Alas, at times man-made and human disasters strike our programme countries and communities, and the humanitarian imperative forces us to react. Whenever a FORUT partner organisation is in a position to provide disaster relief and recovery to disaster-struck communities in which they work, FORUT will support these efforts to its fullest capabilities, in line with international humanitarian law and principles, and in co-ordination with other relevant actors.

FORUT does also work on disaster preparedness by improving the resilience of local communities and local actors. Local CSOs are usually the first to reach populations in need and they stay behind when other actors leave. Just as important is the work done by the informal civil society: family, friends, neighbours. Invariably, the poor suffer the most in disaster situations, as they have less resources and preparedness, and they (especially women and children) are preyed upon by those who will exploit the weak. Empowering women, children and marginalised communities is therefore also a way of increasing local resilience and protecting them against being exploited during and in the wake of man-made and natural disasters.



## **Value Added and Capacity Building**

The concept of equitable partnership implies that FORUT is more than a donor for its partners, the flow of money is matched by a flow of «value added», or actions that increase the capacity of FORUT's partner organisations. However, while the flow of money is unidirectional, the value added is multidirectional: from FORUT to partners, from partners to FORUT and among partners. Rather than seeing ourselves as the only source of value added or as the “capacity builder”, we see FORUT as a system hub and a catalyst which works to ensure that all partners in the FORUT system<sup>7</sup> can learn from each other.

Mutual organisational learning and development are fertilised by transparent, accountable and equitable partnership relations, by an understanding of the different needs and characteristics of each partner and by a mutual commitment to setting aside time and resources to invest in adding value to each other's work.

### **FORUT's direct value added**

FORUT's main contribution to value added is in the thematic area of ADD, where FORUT has world class expertise. The global ADD programme contribute to initiation of discourse on ADD issues and capacity building of FORUT partners through global conferences and consultation meetings, documents, reports, newsletters, trainings, seminars and the website [www.add-resources.org](http://www.add-resources.org).

A second area where FORUT contribute expertise to partners is in the area of Results-Based Management (RBM). RBM is a challenging approach for some partners and it is furthermore a challenge that different donors expect applications and reports to follow different formats. FORUT contribute to partner capacity-building in this area through training courses, joint planning workshops, monitoring and on-the-job guidance, and developing guidelines and how-to-do manuals.

FORUT uses its awareness-raising and advocacy work in Norway and internationally strategically to support the work of its partner organisations. See the chapter on information and advocacy work in Norway for details on this.

### **FORUT's value added as a network hub**

FORUT's partners are leading national organisations within their fields, in particular CR and GE, and some have also received international recognition for their work. In important role for FORUT is therefore to facilitate the exchange of lessons learnt, approaches, materials, ideas and experiences among our partners. This is done through conferences, seminar, webinars, exchanges, study visits and a library of learning materials.

Programme implementation should be evidence-based and informed by research and assessment of impact. FORUT also acts as a hub for dissemination of external knowledge throughout the network of partners. Reports, manuals, evaluation reports and invitations to seminars and training courses are disseminated electronically to partners. FORUT staff

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<sup>7</sup> The FORUT system consists of FORUT, partner organisations abroad and FORUT's owners IOGT Norway, Juvente and Juba.

participate in trainings and seminars in Norway and internationally and offer condensed versions of those to partners when visiting.

FORUT and its partners have access to different regional and global networks, both in civil society and academia, and contribute to capacity building by linking each other with new international partners.

### **Partners' value added to FORUT**

FORUT does not implement programmes itself, and the experience our partners have in implementation is therefore invaluable for the further development of skills and expertise in FORUT itself. Partner visits, reviews and programme reports provide insights which build the capacity of FORUT and increase our understanding of implementation challenges in the field.