

# FORUT Environmental Policy 2024-2028

FORUT – Campaign for Solidarity and Development  
Revised and approved by FORUT Board August 31<sup>st</sup>, 2023

## Introduction

This document presents FORUT's Environmental Policy, revised in September 2023. The document is valid through the next programme period from 2024-2028. It contains an introduction to the topic and states how this policy is related to our vision, mission, and the FORUT Policy Document.

In addition, it describes shortly how we are working to achieve a more equal and sustainable world in our ongoing international development cooperation with partners in 6 countries.

However, this is not an exhaustive strategy nor an action plan, but it outlines our common understanding and basic principles.

## Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to create an internal common understanding that FORUT's vision cannot be achieved without paying attention to environmental and climate issues.

Through this policy, FORUT commits itself to and will operate in compliance with all relevant environmental legislation, and we will strive to use environmental best practices in all we do.

However, in many places where we and our partner organisations work, current legislation is not enough. Therefore, we will continue to identify areas of strengths and weaknesses within our overall programme, regarding our environmental impact. Within our planned activities, we will attempt to decrease any negative impact (*Do No Harm*), but also work to contribute to positive environmental effects in the communities we interact with.

## **Fundamental principles**

FORUT main target groups are women, children, and youth. The rationale for securing an environmental perspective in the work of FORUT is as part of our vision:

*“... 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.”*

Additionally, our Policy Document states that FORUT’s goal is that people have the power to change their lives and our mission 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 through democratic and peaceful means.”*

FORUT recognises that all human activity impacts on the environment, and that climate change 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. Ecosystem preservation is complex and that systemic and generational changes are necessary to ensure our survival from the local to the global level.

Climate change, loss of biodiversity and overexploitation of natural resources threatens 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.

FORUT states that 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.

## **Roles and responsibilities**

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 to address climate change issues.

We recognise that addressing environmental concerns should be done at all levels of the organisation, by all our partners and in all activities. FORUT has control over its own activities and can influence, but not control, the activities of its partners.

This policy is therefore to be regarded as compulsory for FORUT and as suggested standards for our partner organisations (who in some cases have their own, more ambitious, environmental policies).

## **Our approach to environmental issues**

FORUT's approach will focus on the following areas:

**Energy** – As large a part as possible of the electricity used at the offices of FORUT and its partners should come from renewable sources. If this is not available through the conventional electricity grid, options such as solar power should be considered. Natural light for meeting/training venues should be used to the largest extent possible.

**Travels** – Pollution from air travel is a significant source of climate change. It is therefore important to minimise international travel. At the same time, we work with partner organisations around the world, and we have a strong commitment to give them the support they need. Thus, air travel should only be used when unavoidable or to supplement other options. Efficiency is key when travelling and efforts should be made to coordinate activities so that as much as possible can be achieved through as few flights as possible. Digital meetings and webinars are used extensively. Local travels should also be planned to minimise use of fossil fuel.

**Consumables and food** – Our ambition is to minimise the negative environmental impact we have through our consumption. Whenever applicable recycled, re-usable, ecologically certified and/or locally produced products should be preferred. To the extent possible, equipment should be re-used and repaired rather than replaced with new equipment.

**Awareness and training** – We aim to promote environmental awareness among our employees and partner organisations and encourage them to work in an environmentally responsible manner. We do this through sharing and mutual learning among staff and partner organisations about environmental issues that may affect their work.

**Project implementation** – FORUT partners are encouraged to promote environmental sustainability through integrating it in their projects and programmes whenever possible. For example:

- Be involved in networks that advocate for environment related policies and collaborate with other organisations and community groups in environment protection projects within working locations.
- Initiate and implement mini projects by children (e.g., in child clubs) which include components connected to environmental protection.

- Integrate issues of environmental protection in projects dealing with other issues, for example by promoting energy conservation, water saving, safe waste disposal, clean villages, and households, etc.
- Focus on the environmental harmful effects of production and consumption of alcohol, drugs, and tobacco, such as soil erosion, use of fertile land and use of scarce water resources.

In addition, FORUT requires staff to follow specified procedures and notify management of situations and activities that are potentially damaging to the environment. We will conserve natural resources, biodiversity and prevent pollution by reducing waste, reusing and recycling materials, and disposing of all hazardous and other waste in a legal, safe, and responsible manner.

### **Monitoring and compliance**

To follow-up on our work to reduce our environmental impact and improve our ambitions in the field of sustainability the Board of FORUT will annually report on our adherence to the environmental policy to the Annual Meeting.

Our partner organisations are required to report on environmental and climate issues as part of the annual reporting on cross cutting issues to FORUT.