

Project summary

1. GENERAL INFORMATION	
Name of the project : Evaluating the FOuNDAtion for Policy & Advocacy Work in Development Cooperation in Romania (2007-2017)	
National platform(s): The Romanian NGDO Platform	
Acronym(s) : FOND	Number of members : 34
Intervention country/ies: Romania	
Start and end dates : 01.06.2018 - 30.09.2019	Project duration : 18 months
Total amount of the project in euro: 14,748 €	Total amount of the project funded by Forus: 11,798 €
2. DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECT	
<p>Presentation of the project:</p> <p>The project had as main aim to assess the impact and results of the Romanian NGDO Platform during its first 10 years of existence by actively engaging members and other relevant external stakeholders. The evaluation was launched in March 2019 and based on its recommendations, a follow-up training was organized in September 2019, focusing on engaging the members in re-defining FOND’s strategic objectives on advocacy and its positioning towards the relevant stakeholders.</p>	
<p>Main achievements during the project:</p> <p>The main achievement of the project is that it supported for the first time a long term evaluation of FOND (its first ten years of activity), enabling a more in-depth reflection on the results of the platform as well as providing important recommendations and input for the next strategic planning cycle for FOND (2021-2025). It is an important example of accountability and legitimacy for the platform in relation to its members and the main relevant external stakeholders. In addition, this process can be shared and encouraged in the case of other similar national NGO platforms.</p>	
<p>Who are the stakeholders targeted by the project and which were the mechanisms for their participation?</p> <p>The stakeholders involved in the project were FOND members and other NGOs, policy makers and other stakeholders who have interacted with the platform both at national and regional level. Their main role was to provide input and recommendations during the evaluation process.</p>	
3. IMPACT OF THE PROJET	
<p>Please describe the impact of the project in terms of capacity building</p> <p>Based on the conclusions of the impact evaluation, a follow-up training for the members was organized in September 2019 focusing on: strengthening CSO resilience, operating at national level within the current context of shrinking space for civil society (re-thinking doing “advocacy as usual”), analysing the current advocacy strategy of FOND, as well as the recommendations from the evaluation to identify new advocacy directions for FOND. As a follow-up of the training, the recommendations and action points identified during this training will feed in the next strategic planning cycle for the new FOND strategy (2021-2025).</p>	
<p>Did the project have a concrete impact on public policies?</p> <p>The impact evaluation was targeting the results of FOND’s activity in achieving its mission: to contribute to an effective implementation of the national development cooperation policy. Having in mind the type of activities included in the project, the impact of the project did not target public policies directly.</p>	
<p>What are the potential long-term impacts of the project? What continuity will be given to the project?</p> <p>The evaluation of FOND’s impact and the synthesis with best practices for other networks will continue to be shared with similar national NGO platforms as useful resources. In addition, the conclusions that resulted from the evaluation and the follow-up training will feed in the planning cycle for the next FOND strategy (2021-2025). Moreover, the extensive format of the evaluation encompasses very well and supports the preservation of the institutional memory for the first 10 years of the platform.</p>	

4. RELATION WITH FORUS

To what extent has the project contributed to strengthening the Forus' network?

The process and conclusions of the impact evaluation inspired the elaboration of a synthesis with best practices and lessons for other Forus members or similar NGO networks, which included recommendations on the: self-awareness and positioning within the sector, capacity building, building and maintaining a strong membership, advocacy and stakeholder engagement and connecting (network engagement).

What was the added value of Forus' support to this project?

The main added value was that Forus' support targeted specific capacity needs for national NGO platforms, having a very good understanding of the realities of its membership. Also, it provided a flexible and well-developed sub-granting mechanism, encouraging a smooth implementation of the project.

Have you produced a deliverable that could be useful for other Forus members?

The synthesis mentioned above with best practices and lessons learnt, called "17 Lessons for building and strengthening the impact of NGDO platforms", which was disseminated among Forus members.

What are your recommendations for platforms wishing to implement a similar project in the future?

For other platforms wishing to conduct a similar long-term impact evaluation of their activity, they should: have specific objectives on what will be evaluated (external impact or organizational performance) and why (how will the results be used later), involve members in early stages of the evaluation, make sure to reach a diversity of stakeholders, share the evaluation results with the members or other relevant stakeholders and also take the time to discuss them collectively and finally use the results to start implementing changes.