



ANNUAL REPORT 2019

FORUMSYD



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We virtually sat down with Anna Stenvinkel and Victoria Enström Lindskog to talk about their first year as Secretary-General and Chairperson of the Board.

“I stepped on board a rather rocky ship when I first started at Forum Syd. We had just come out of a big reorganisation and my first assignment was to build trust, both with members, staff and the Board”, says Anna Stenvinkel. “My role is to be an enabler and to solve problems - that is my driving force. To create the conditions for us to do a good job”.

On top of her list, after being appointed Secretary-General, was to meet our member organisations. “It was the best thing I have done this year. I look forward to continue our conversations and develop new ways to engage with our members and use our potential as a platform for civil society”, she says.

A stronger organisation ready to defend civil society

With a positive staff and Board survey under our belt, 2019 showed great promise for some well needed calmness within the organisation. “There has been such a positive development at Forum Syd during this year. We have become a more stable

organisation, and you can feel it!”, says Victoria Enström.

But for democracy and human rights defenders around the world, things are everything but calm. “We are in a time where democracy is challenged in several countries and Forum Syd is needed to defend the right of civil society to operate. We are part of the resistance that is being formed against hatred, harassment and the shrinking space of civil society”, Victoria continues.

A year of environmental activism

2019 was the year where young people took to the street to demand climate action. To hold the international community accountable to commitments made in the Paris Agreement in order to fight global warming. “Environmental issues are closely linked to democracy. We need civil society to reach sustainable development”, says Victoria Enström.

Within this year of mobilisation, it became evident that the youth had found new means of organising themselves. Anna Stenvinkel believes that these new types of movements need to have more influence on Forum Syd: “How can we, as Forum Syd, support new ways of organising in civil society? That is an insight we will take with us in 2020.”

This is Forum Syd

All of Forum Syd's work aims to strengthen civil society, in Sweden and around the world. A diverse and strong civil society is the foundation of democracy and a prerequisite when building a world where everyone can affect change.

Forum Syd is a politically and religiously unaffiliated development cooperation organisation with around 140 member organisations from Swedish civil society. Together we work with human and civil rights, and facilitate popular participation around the globe. Forum Syd was founded in 1995 and is the largest civil society platform in Sweden.

Aside from our office in Sweden, we are located in Belarus (Lithuania), Cambodia, Colombia, Kenya, Liberia and Somalia through which we provide direct support to local organisations on the ground. We mediate grants from Sida (the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency) to Swedish civil society organisations cooperating with local partners in 67 countries. Forum Syd also advocates for a just and sustainable development.

Our work centres on enabling people to organise to claim their rights and take control of their lives; for it is only then that democracy can grow, resources can be distributed more fairly, and poverty can be reduced.

Forum Syd's four roles to strengthen civil society

- **Advocator.** We advocate for change that contributes to a just and sustainable world.
- **Capacity Developer.** We strengthen development actors in Sweden and abroad.
- **Development Actor.** We contribute to development in partnership with civil society organisations in partner countries.
- **Grant Administrator.** We distribute and quality assure grants to Swedish organisations working with international development co-operation and with Swedish information campaigns on global issues.

We distributed

242

million SEK to

140

organisations in

67

countries



Namukobe Rebecca, a community member in Mauta, Jinja Uganda and one of UNACOH's project target groups. Photo: Alamin Mutunga

Sweden's biggest platform organisation for civil society

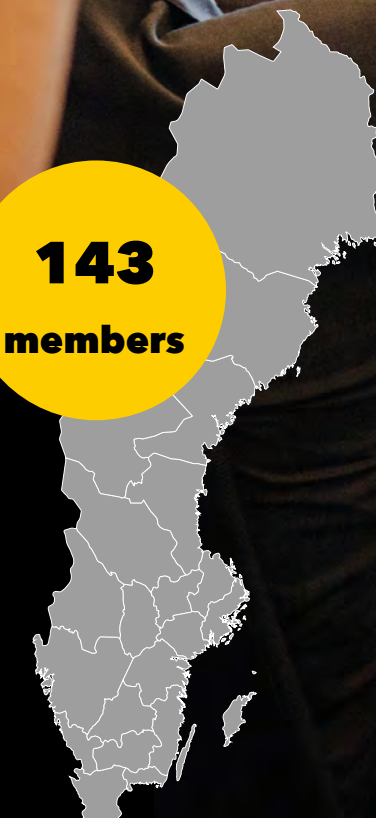
Forum Syd is a membership based organisation and a platform for civil society in Sweden. Our members are Swedish organisations and together we work towards justice and a sustainable world where everyone has the power to affect change. Our collective efforts defend and safeguard democracy and human rights in a world where civil rights are under attack. Forum Syd facilitates forums for

sharing experience and developing capacity: we can act as a megaphone and represent members in relevant national and international forums.

During 2019 Forum Syd supported member organisations by providing capacity development about information security and EU funding opportunities tailored specifically to the members. In addition to the Annual Meeting and annual Members' Meeting, the new Sec-

retary General has made efforts to meet as many members as possible by initiating informal group meetings and attending events of members. Forum Syd has increased advocacy cooperation with the members, to create opinion in the Swedish debate. Also, several members have made use of Forum Syd's office space for arranging meetings and seminars.civil society to reach sustainable development.

143
members



Swedish civil society has a long history of cross-border linkages with global civil society. Forum Syd acknowledges the diversity and multifaceted experiences of these civil society relationships, and channels funding accordingly to further this development cooperation. In 2019, 242 MSEK was distributed to 206 projects amongst 140 Swedish organisations. All projects funded have a rights-based approach and contributes to Forum Syd's overall goal where everyone has the power to affect change.

Peace building with a gender perspective

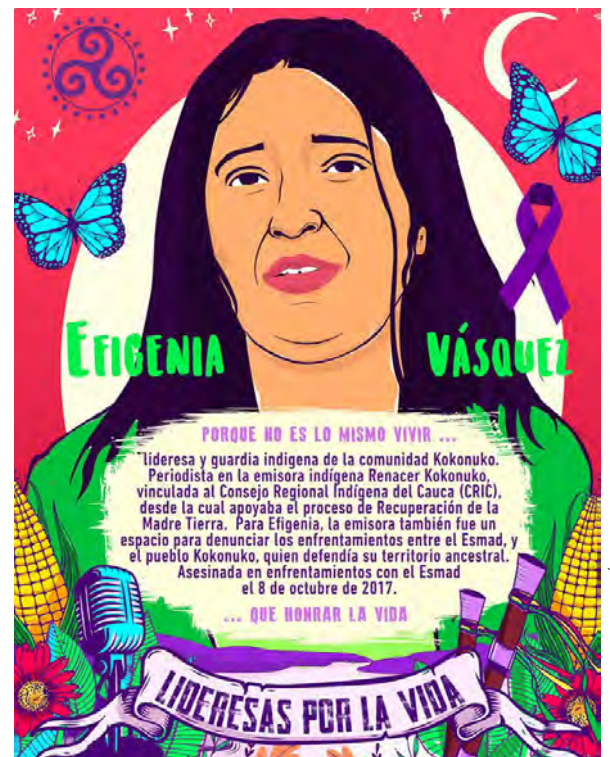
In Colombia, women who are human rights defenders face greater risks of violence and sexual harassment against them or their friends and family due to their gender. According to the OHCHR report on Colombia for 2019, there was an increase of almost 50 per cent in murder cases of women human rights defenders.

During 2019, Praktisk Solidaritet, together with its local partner CDR (Corporación para el Desarrollo Regional translates Corporation for Regional Development), carried out the project Peace with a Gender Approach. The purpose of the project is to strengthen the psychosocial and thematic capacity of local human rights organisations and their capacity to influence local peacebuilding processes in the city of Cali. So to make them effective actors in building sustainable local peace with a gender perspective.

“At first I imagined something focused on peace, but then I understood the idea, that the concept of peace must have a notion of a feminist and gender equality perspective”, says Juan David Acevedo, participant in the project.

The project is recognised in the city of Cali for its relevance through the work carried out with the Political School through its advocacy actions. The project has provided opportunities for the exchange of knowledge, thematic agendas and for mutual support with other civil

“We work daily in our settings and territories on advocacy that influence the programs, public policies and designs of the State, but also the community.



FLYER DESIGN: CORPORACIÓN PARA EL DESARROLLO REGIONAL

society organisations in Cali. During these meetings, concrete actions have been created for support of human rights and to strengthen social mobilisations. Lessons learnt has meant that one of the main focuses for the future is to continue implementing advocacy activities in the city and in other regions, due to the impact it has had on different social actors.

“We work daily in our settings and territories on advocacy that influences the programs, public policies and designs of the State, but also the community”, says Catalina Galeano, Advocacy coordinator of the project.

Through the initiatives of activism (artistic activism), grassroots organisations and other organisations in the city have had the opportunity to express and promote their work. Activities such as theatre and dance, have made it possible to expose human rights violations, creating a stronger awareness for people to demand their rights, to mobilise and to continue working as agents of change.



PHOTO: CARLOS CÁRDENAS, FORUM SYD

Networks for sustainable farming

Since the beginning of the current government of Jair Bolsonaro, Brazil has experienced a notorious shrinking of space for civil society. An example of this is the project to monitor the activities of NGOs and civil society organisations. Restrictions have been imposed on the management of the bank accounts of the organisations, which makes it difficult to manage the few cooperation or solidarity resources that they have access to. Every day more civil society organisations are closing due to a shortage of resources.

In this context, a creative and very effective response has been implemented by Terrazul, a Brazilian civil society organisation, which works in strong partnership with the Swedish organisation Framtidsjorden. Terrazul, founded in 1999 as an alliance between unionists and environmentalists is one of the leading organisations of the Brazilian Federation of NGOs and social movements.

“Today we continue to be a socio-environmental institution, but we have expanded our work in addition to working with social movements”, says Pedro Ivo, founding member of Terrazul. “We now also work with public authorities, local governments, the national government, the Parliament and we are also starting the discussion with companies, regarding social and environmental responsibility. Nonetheless, our main objective remains the same, that is, fighting for sustainable societies and always involving the environmental issue with the social issue, understanding that human beings cannot be separated from nature.”

“We have learned by working in a network to be more collaborative, in the search for a more supportive world, a more just and sustainable world.

The region of Brasília, where the work of Terrazul is focused, has complex environmental and social conditions. Since 2018 the region experiences a water crisis (scarcity) and 90 per cent of the land is not titled, creating social conflicts which also involve indigenous communities that have settled in the region and are demanding collective titling of the land they are currently occupying.

One of the main efforts that Terrazul has been developing in the Brasília region with the support of Framtidsjorden, focuses on agro-ecological farming. This involves medium and small-scale farmers that grow organic products, which are certified thanks to the network established by a Union of organic farmers.

Terrazul is optimizing the potential of networks, both for their advocacy work on national and local policies, as well as support for the development of sustainable alternatives for the rural and indigenous communities of the region.

“Network performance is palpable. It is more efficient, cheaper and more collaborative. By working in a network we have learned to be more collaborative, in the search for a more supportive world, a more just and sustainable world.” says Pedro Ivo.



“Solving all kinds of problems”: Swedish-Guatemalan civil society cooperation

The southern coast of Guatemala is the most productive region of the country, with big scale production of banana, sugar cane, rubber and palm tree. Unfortunately, as in many other countries of the region, the monoculture model implies conflict with access to land for peasants and rural workers. The spraying of crops with toxic chemicals affects the health and the farming of peasants considerably. The monoculture also affects the water and waste system, creating severe flooding emergencies in the rain season, and water scarcity in the dry season.

Since 2008 the CUC (Comité de Unidad Campesina, translated Peasant Unity Committee) has, with the support of Action Aid Guatemala, been working on risk management with the communities that have been most affected by these social and environmental impacts. Conditions that have given cause to the increase of migration from Guatemala to Mexico and the United States.

The support that CUC and Action Aid give to local communities in southern Guatemala covers a wide range of actions, from infrastructure improvement to productive initiatives, political schools, and legal advice. The latter has been a very relevant strategy, as rural leaders and human rights defenders are permanently running the risk of being prosecuted by their legitimate actions.

“We are talking about a criminalisation strategy that

is deliberate, it is a perverse way of using the law to wear down social movements and human rights defenders”, explains Patricia Castillo, programme and project manager for Action Aid Guatemala. “The use of the law and legal resources is a terrible exercise of power, mainly by companies. Those ways of criminalising people destroy their lives, subject them to personal and family break-down.”

Civil society in Guatemala is making great efforts, to confront the current extractive and agro-industrial model and build alternative societal models together with communities. In this sense, Action Aid and CUC address the effects of climate change by promoting forms of sustainable agriculture based on the recovery of ancestral practices and appropriation of best practices for soil conservation.

“We are talking about a criminalisation strategy that is deliberate, it is a perverse way of using the law to wear down social movements and human rights defenders.



Community bakery led by a women cooperative in El Socorro, Guatemala. Left photo: Women cooperative of Amaranto seed processing in Chiquirines, Guatemala.

Photos: Carlos Cárdenas, Forum Syd



Memory Matiki with her son Matika who suffers from Cerebral Palsy at their home in Mbare, Harare. Photos: Alamin Mutunga

Where disability could mean isolation for the disabled and stigma for the mother

Martial Matiki, Nyasha Mudirira and Charles Manyarara have cerebral palsy. These children, alongside their parents, have suffered numerous challenges and discrimination often as a result of ignorance, cultural misconceptions and public stigma. Women suffer disproportionately as parents of children with disability. Theresa Makwara is one such parent, left by her husband when her child was barely crawling.

For most women like Theresa, giving birth to a child with severe disability can easily lead to divorce – with the women often left alone to cater for the child and the family.

Theresa, together with other parents facing similar issues formed Zimbabwe Parents of Handicapped Children Association (ZPCHA), an organisation that seeks to advocate for rights of children with disability in Zimbabwe.

“As mothers of children with disabilities, we faced many challenges. Some of our spouses ran away, abandoning us, as they did not want any associations with

children with disability,” says Theresa before adding, “It’s at this point that we realised, why can’t we organise and come together and fight for our children.”

For fear of discrimination, most of these severely disabled children are locked in chains in their houses, limiting their mobility. Consequently, they are vulnerable to abuse, especially disabled girls who are commonly subjected to sexual and gender-based violence often from family and friends.

The work of ZPCHA and other like-minded stakeholders is changing the situation of children with disability in Zimbabwe. There’s now a lot of public awareness on severe forms of disabilities which has enhanced community understanding. Through the support of Forum Syd through Föreningen Headway Africa, ZPCHA has empowered over 500 parents of children with disability with over 200 disabled children actively involved in various programmes.

“Communities are now more aware and better understand the rights of children with disabilities. This has,

in turn, helped many parents in the community to come out in the open with their children and stop locking them in their houses,” says Theresa.

These parents have lobbied the government, to significant success, for inclusion and protecting the rights of disabled children. The City of Harare has already allocated several parcels of land to parents with children with disabilities - an essential step towards guaranteeing these children right to housing. Most of the parents are hoping to make enough money to build their own homes, to escape the higher costs of rents and unfriendly disability housing, limiting their children mobility.

Furthermore, the City of Harare has scrapped off clinic charges for all children with disability below the age of 5. The waiver of these charges will make a considerable difference as children with special needs every so often require a lot of healthcare placing an enormous economic load to already overburdened parents.

Together with other stakeholders, these parents have successfully pushed for the signing of The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), an international human rights treaty of the United Nations intended to protect the rights and dignity of people with disabilities.

“Communities are now more aware and better understand the rights of children with disabilities. This has, in turn, helped many parents in the community to come out in the open with their children and stop locking them in their houses.

- Theresa MaKwara,
Team Leader and
founder member
of ZPHCA



PHOTO: ALAMIN MUTUNGA



PUSHPA DEVI, CITY COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVE. PHOTO: HUNGERPROJEKTET

Elected female leaders in rural India

India has amongst the highest proportion of malnourished children in the world and in some rural areas the proportion of the poor is also among the highest. India is also ranked by the Thomson Reuters Foundation as the most dangerous country to be a woman in.

With the support of Forum Syd, The Hunger Project Sweden together with The Hunger Project India run a programme with the goal to strengthen women's leadership in the Uttarakhand and Odisha regions. The aim is to get women to run in local elections for the city council, the so-called Panchayats, and then have the prerequisites to carry out their political duties effectively.

By law, at least one-third of the seats in the city council are reserved for women. Nevertheless, women are often not given the opportunity to participate in decisions under the same conditions as men.

– Women from society's most marginalised groups are systematically excluded from equal participation in society, so even if we have legislation in place, the effect is not the one intended. To get there, we must empower women to dare to take their share of power. It is a matter of equality and rights, says Ruchi Yadav, Program Manager at The Hunger Project in India.

In 2019, an external evaluation of The Hunger Project's five-year leadership program for elected female politicians in the state of Uttarakhand was conducted. It showed that 82 per cent of the women feel a stronger self-confidence and 75 per cent of all elected politicians want to stand in the next election. The women felt that they have a good chance of being re-elected, that it benefits the family, and that their work contributes to the advancement of women and the development of society. Forty-five per cent of the politically elected female politicians felt they had become more aware of their rights and opportunities. Through this programme, more equal structures and political programmes have been created in the local city councils where the women work. This has increased the participation of women

“All the time they try to ridicule and downplay our opinions. It is only because of the law that we women have succeeded in gaining a small but justified share of the power. Because, when we get together, many, they have no choice but to listen to us. That is why we must organise together!”

in all parts of the electoral process. In most villages, an average of four proposals considered at each meeting came from women.

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Raising understanding of women's rights

The Swedish Theodori Society (TS) and Theodori Rural Development Project (TRDP), with the support of Forum Syd, are carrying out a village empowerment project in the Pakur District of Jharkhand, India. The aim is to strengthen the tribal Santal people in the area, which is an ethnic minority that is often being deprived of the rights to education, health services and government development programs.

The three-year project started in 2019 with the aim to train and support villages to strengthen their village councils, raise understanding and acceptance of women's rights and participation, support women's organisation, train and encourage elected leaders and villagers to claim their rights to health, livelihood interventions and other services in cooperation with government institutions.

TRDP takes the role of supporting self-organising through training, information and advice, with a frequent presence in the villages. In addition, children's education is supported. Experiences from previous projects show that weak local community structures is a root problem, and that it is possible within a few years to strengthen such local bodies so that they acquire strength in their advocacy of rights, liaising with duty bearers and that women's voice can be strengthened at village level.

One year into the project there is already significant results in empowering women and raising awareness about their rights.

“Now we ladies can be brave towards the authorities. We take responsibility for the health of our kids”
- Santoshila Marandi



PHOTO: THE SWEDISH THEODORI SOCIETY

Having a rights-based approach implies local ownership of development interventions. Local partnerships are therefore key and Forum Syd has direct partnerships with 125 civil society organisations in Belarus, Cambodia, Colombia, Kenya, Liberia and Somalia. In 2019, 76 MSEK was dedicated to strengthening these local actors in their context specific pursuit of claiming space to secure civil society's influence on democracy.

Widows organising to fight sexual cleansing

The death of a spouse is a tragic event that can cause social and emotional stress for anyone. For women of Siaya County in Western Kenya, this can lead to stigmatisation, humiliation and socio-economic exclusion. In this community, widows are culturally considered impure, and tradition dictates that they must be cleansed of their partners' death to remove the bad omen.

The cleansing ritual calls for a woman to engage in sexual intercourse with a 'cleanser', after which the woman is accepted again by the community or 'inherited' by her brother-in-law. The woman is expected to pay the 'cleanser' to sleep with her without protection. If any protection is used, the cleansing is not considered complete.

"The cleansing ritual is an extremely humiliating exercise where any villager is randomly picked and paid to sleep with a widow to cleanse her of death," says Roseline Orwa, founder of Rona foundation.

Roseline has herself endured and overcome the ritual first-hand. She refused to be cleansed and instead became an inspiration and a widows rights activist, empowering hundreds of women and using her experiences to serve as the voice of widows in Kenya.

"Widows are inherited to fulfil cultural obligations, and unless cleansing happens widows are socially discriminated to engage in socio-economic activities like farming, trade, rebuilding their homes, partaking in significant cultural and social events," states Roseline.

Widows are now organising into self-help widow groups calling for change and giving them a voice to advocate for their rights. Through Rona Foundation, a Forum Syd partners through the Wajibu Wetu Programme, up to 60 widows' groups have been formed in two years. They are actively engaged in empowering their members and communities on widows' rights and



PHOTO: AUGUSTINE KARANI, FORUM SYD

“As a widow, I believe I have a right to my land and use it unconditionally. I also have a right to my body against any form of violation.

sexual and gender-based violence. The self-help groups have enabled the groups to support new widows not to undergo discriminative practices like cleansing but also claim their rights to land and property.

"As a widow, I believe I have a right to my land and use it unconditionally. I also have a right to my body against any form of violation" says Cyprose Okumu before adding, "losing my husband should not make me lose my rights!"

Cyprose Okumu is leading her group Smart Leaders, and together they have enhanced community awareness on discriminative practices against widows.

"I am now a trained paralegal, and I know my rights well. Through this knowledge of the law, I now offer advice solutions to instances of injustices against widows and children," says Cyprose.

Emerging from the Shadows: LGBTQI activist claiming their space in Rwanda

The right to love remains a contentious issue in Africa. Mainstream public sentiment remains largely anti-homosexual and overshadows constitutionally guaranteed rights in Africa.

Rwanda is no different. Even though homosexuality is not illegal in Rwanda, it is however treated as though it were, with several cases of harassment and arrests by police. To avoid physical and verbal abuse and harassment, LGBTQIA people must keep their sexuality and gender identity a secret. But in these shadows, bold voices are emerging, challenging the status quo and advocating the rights of sexual and gender minorities, albeit to much personal risk.

One such voice is Emmanuel Ngiruwonsanga, the president of the Amahoro Human Respect in Musanze - a remote town in northern Rwanda. Emmanuel, who is openly gay and proud, says despite the situation of the LGBTQIA community in Rwanda being slightly better than its counterpart Uganda, they still face numerous challenges from name-calling and mistreatment, to being denied a job or access to healthcare services.

ANSP+ has been implementing a project that targets the LGBTQIA community through the support of Pharmacist without Borders Sweden (FUG), a Forum Syd partner. Through this project, Emmanuel and his group have been trained on LGBTQIA and sexual and reproductive health rights including HIV prevention, family planning, male circumcision and livelihoods. As a result, more members are openly coming out and claiming their space.

"The project has helped us to be open. Initially, we could not speak to the media, but with the training by ANSP+, we are free to talk to anybody, including the media," says Emmanuel.

Through the project, there have been joint engagements and dialogues with various duty bearers and other key stakeholders like the media which has helped enhance their rights, access to healthcare and further bridging the gap between these sexual minorities and the authorities.

"The project has made it possible for us to meet our leaders, and they now know our situation. In case of a problem, I know where I can seek help because they know about me," he says.

Emmanuel acknowledges that the media has been crucial in enhancing awareness of the rights of sexual minorities. The joint training, they did with the media, improved the media understanding of their plight, and the tone of covering LGBTQIA issue has shifted positively

For Emmanuel, despite the progress being made, there's still a long way to go. He says the LGBTQIA rights will fully be secured if there's an article in the constitution guaranteeing these rights.

"We just want to be safe and free to love and engage in productive activities like any member of the society," says Emmanuel. He adds, "For that to be attained, we need these rights enshrined in the constitution of Rwanda



PHOTO: AUGUSTINE KARANI, FORUM SYD

“We just want to be safe and free to love and engage in productive activities like any member of the society.



Asma Saeed, a female activist giving her remarks during an event held in Borama, Somaliland. Photo credit: CPA, Hargeisa.

Somali women in politics

Women's role in Somali politics has long been too low and remains a sensitive topic in the country. Somali society typically ascribes to more conservative belief of a woman's role in family and community life. Women are seen as unreliable representatives in the political arena because of their dual affiliation to their father's and husband's clan. This is changing, but there's a long road ahead.

Asma Saeed, a young female activist from Borama, Somaliland was one of the trainees who participated in a training aimed at promoting women political participation in Somaliland. The training was organised by Centre for Policy Analysis (CPA), a local organisation in Somaliland, with funding from Forum Syd. Asma who holds a bachelor's degree in business administration had little interest in advocating for women rights and political participation before participating in the training.

"Before the training, I understood well that women had little role in the political space in Somaliland. And women have lived with this sort of inequality and very little was done to address it. It was not a concern for many of us."

The introduction in 2016 of the 30 per cent parliamentary gender quota in Somalia marked a significant and important step towards achieving women's equal political representation. Unfortunately, in Somaliland, the political trajectory has diverged significantly from that in the south and east, with no quota for women in the parliamentary system. According to CPA, nearly 97 per cent are male in the current administration.

The CPA training provided a platform where right-holders and civil society representatives were able to interact and directly ask questions to duty-bearers on pertinent issues affecting women and securing their fair

“As women, we've agreed not to let a few men decide our fate in politics, we should decide that for ourselves and pave our way. We shall stand for our right to equal participation.

share in the political space. The government officials who were in attendance, vowed to respect and support women networks and women political contestants who have interest in running political seats in the upcoming elections.

"The training brought together different minds of people who were willing to support women in securing their equal share in parliamentary and local council elections. The training enlightened me on ways of advocating for women rights, equipped me with the advocacy skills that I required and how I can constructively engage with political leaders, elders and other decision-makers in our society."

Asma mobilised women who recently graduated from local universities in her town of Borama to jointly push for their common goal of achieving improved women representation. Through her advocacy effort, Asma organised one-on-one meetings with duty-bearers such as relevant parliamentary groups, ministers, community and religious leaders and international community representatives and development partners. The duty-bearers have promised to join them in pushing through the change they want to achieve in the society and in the political arena.

"As women, we've agreed not to let a few men decide our fate in politics, we should decide that for ourselves and pave our way. We shall stand for our right to equal participation." She said.

United community for environmental conservation

B6 Community Fishery Federation (CFiF) in the Kampong Cham Province, Cambodia, is home to 521 families and covers up to 9,778.50 hectares. A participatory approach where everyone involved needs to take part in conservation work is key to their successful fishery resources management.

Before the project started in 2015, the community faced several challenges such as, illegal fishing activities, flooded forest clearance for dry season rice fields, and suffered from floods that affected fish conservation lakes, deep pools, main lake and some streams. The hydropower dam development on the upstream of Mekong river had affected endangered species and decreased the fish stock in the area. However, the most

challenging issue was the lack of collaboration between community, local authorities and government.

CFiF has received support from Forum Syd through Fisheries Action Coalition Team (FACT) to implement a project that aim at contributing to fisheries resources conservation and sustainable use of natural resources, through a participatory approach.

It has resulted in increased broodstock fish through active participation of community patrolling teams to combat the illegal fishing in this area.

"We should work together to protect our fisheries resources toward sustainability for the sake of our current people livelihoods and young generation", said Lay Eang, Roka A commune council.



A gate to improved livelihood

The Changkran Roy community forestry in Cambodia, identified in 2017 the need for a water gate, or spill gate. Ever since, they have lobbied local authorities to allocate resources to the infrastructure. Two years later the community won the battle and construction began.

A water gate is designed to regulate water flows between a dam and a downstream area. Community members saw the need to be able to control the water levels and maintain a flow in the waterfall to attract tourists.

Community leader Chhoeun Sody said, "The spillway is important in generating community incomes for more than 150 people including 40 women; most of the women are directly benefitting from the eco-tourism. It was prioritised as the main part ensuring sustainable

eco-tourism, especially a waterfall getting longer than before even though the dry season."

Forum Syd's partner Live and Learn Cambodia (LLC) provided technical coaching to representatives from six community-based organisations so that they gained more understanding and practical knowledge on how to influence concerned authorities.

The lobbying has created a new and constructive relationship between the community and the local authorities. Aok Sam Eath, Project Manager of LLC, said that after the coaching, the community frequently joins meetings with the Varin district and community councils, which has increased communication and mutual understanding.



Rooda founder of the ElmiMedics at her main business outlet in Hargeisa, 2019. Photo credit: Forum Syd

Entrepreneur redefines the pharmaceutical market in Somalia

In 1982, Rhoda moved to Sweden to reunite with her father. Conscious of the healthcare shortage in her home country, Rhoda pursued a Bachelor of Pharmaceutical Science and then worked as a manager in one of the pharmaceuticals in Gothenburg.

Early 2013, Rhoda, returned to Hargeisa to visit her family along with her son. Her son had stomach complications, so she took him to a health facility in Hargeisa. To her surprise, her son was prescribed with two medications – one, banned by the European Union and the second was intended to cleanse the kidney and not the stomach. She felt a deep urge to do something about this problem.

In Africa and particularly in Somalia, it is widely

believed that people with low-income or even in hard-to-reach areas have health issues because they cannot access medical services on time. However, Rhoda believes that there's more than meet the eye in the country where there's no regulation and legislations on the pharmaceutical goods coming into the country. This has led to a market flooded with poor quality and counterfeit medicines, putting lives of people at risk.

"I always had the dream of giving back to my community. I started by looking at the types and quality of medicines in our shelves. They were cheap but poor quality and by far, below international standards".

Armed with only her vision, a strong determination and just about few thousands of dollars, she started ElmiMedic's in Hargeisa. ElmiMedic's quickly got a footing in the market, thanks to the quality of the products she shipped from Sweden. In 2018, Rhoda applied to the Somali Swedish Business Programme (SSBP) where she was accepted and given a grant to expand her business.

SSBP enabled Rhoda to open a branch in Jigjiga yar – a suburb of Hargeisa which has large Somali dias-



“ I always had the dream of giving back to my community. I started by looking at the types and quality of medicines in our shelves. They were cheap but poor quality and by far, below international standards

pora community. Today, Rhoda's business employed nine full-time workers, five female and four male workers. She supplies pharmaceutical goods to neighbouring towns of Borama, Burao and Somalia's capital city Mogadishu. Tapping into the growing market for pharmaceutical products, Rhoda plans over the next few years, to spread her business across the country.

As a woman in a male dominated society, Rhoda's success isn't without hurdles which she faced heads on. There are few women-owned businesses in the country being denied the network to lean on for mentorship and support. There's little microfinancing opportunity for females as most banks have stringent microfinancing requirement that favour men over women. Rhoda's defied all social expectations and rose to become a hope to thousands of women and girls who look up to her as business role model.

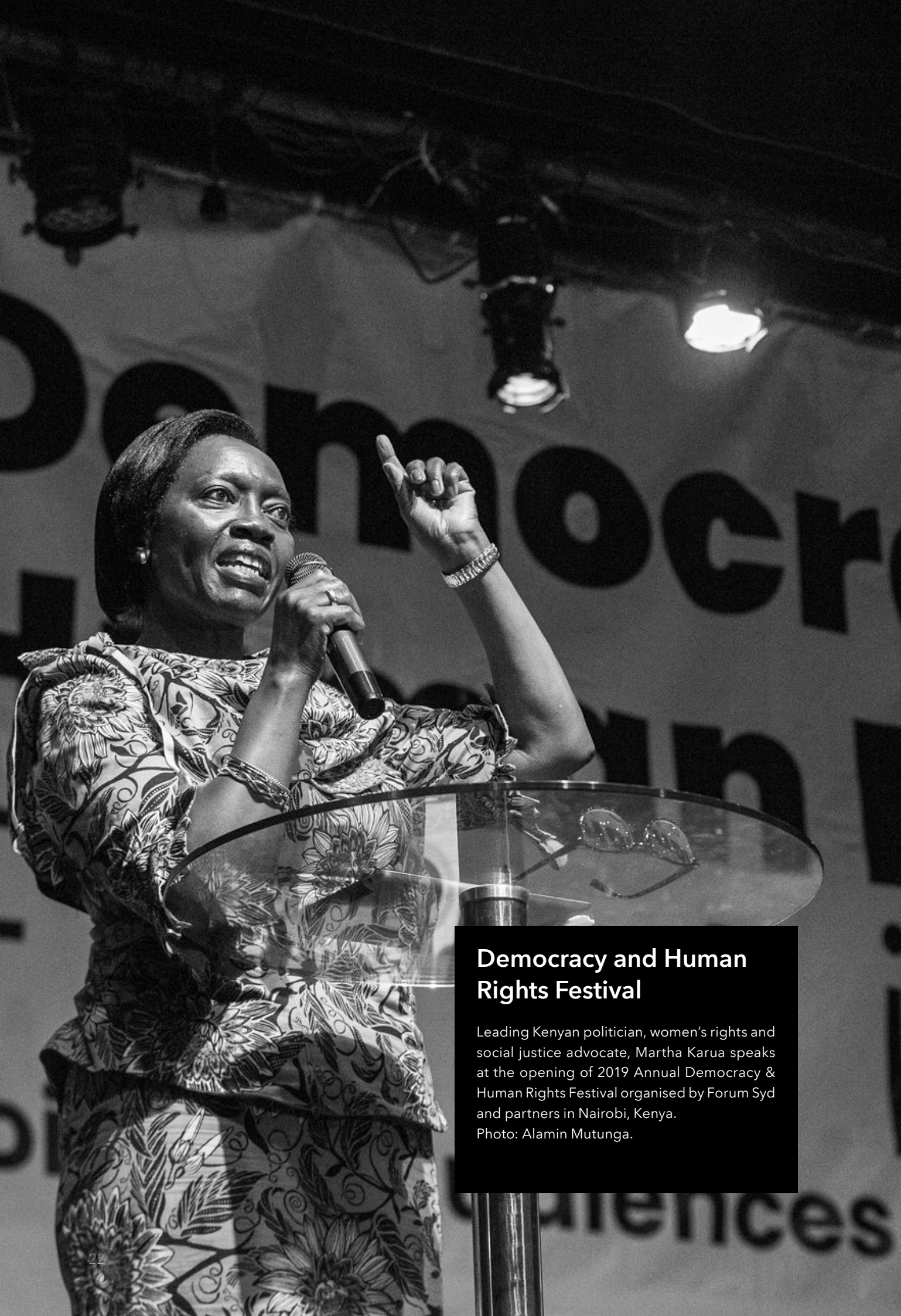


PHOTO: PERSONAL ACCOUNT OF ALEKSANDRA DEVICH

Inclusive Barista

Inclusive Barista offers free training on how to become a barista to people with disabilities and helps them find jobs in cities across Belarus. Teaching the skills of a barista is only half the goal, as Inclusive Barista also hopes to promote a more welcoming environment for people with disabilities, for example by creating space for people in wheelchairs and modifying tools in the café.

“ Based on the experience we have gained so far, we can say that it's actually not that complicated to make one's café barrier-free and friendly for people with disabilities.” - Yuliya Voitsik, Inclusive Barista.



Democracy and Human Rights Festival

Leading Kenyan politician, women's rights and social justice advocate, Martha Karua speaks at the opening of 2019 Annual Democracy & Human Rights Festival organised by Forum Syd and partners in Nairobi, Kenya. Photo: Alamin Mutunga.

Multi-stakeholders approach countering the shrinking civic space in Zambia

Across Africa, democracy has been rescinding. Patterns of government repression and the crackdown on civic space and the activities of civil society organisations (CSOs), the media, artists and individual activists have been on the rise. This growing restriction and clamping down of basic rights is not only shrinking the civic space but also destroying the backbone of democracy and respect for human rights. With shrinking space manifested across Africa, Zambia is no different.

"In this country when you ask people how they have used your money you get arrested," says Kausa Mbasela, a leading journalist at Muvi TV. "So anybody with a contrary voice to the powers that be is deemed an enemy of the state. A lot of civil society organisations in this regard are seen as enemies of the state," adds Kausa.

According to Richard Mulonga, a digital activist, repressive laws have proliferated, negatively impacting freedom of expression and the privacy of politically engaged actors. Increasing surveillance, arrests and legal prosecution based on internet behaviour is discouraging online activism.

"Young people in universities do not blog anymore, and you can tell that they feel when you are blogging there is someone who is watching the internet," says Richard. He adds, "We feel that it is not democratic to make citizens have that kind of approach to democracy."

“ In this country when you ask people how they have used your money you get arrested.

A multi-stakeholder effort is organising to push back these regressive state tendencies. These efforts facilitated by Action Aid Zambia and Action Aid Sweden through the support of Forum Syd are already bearing fruits in safeguarding civic freedoms. Bringing together religious leaders, civil society, artists, the media, private sector and the political class, these actors have been deliberating on how to safeguard civic spaces and human rights.

Bishop John Mambo, a religious leader and the Chairperson of Civil Society Constitution Agenda (CiSCA),

states that civil society and other critical actors relaxed in the 90s when Zambia and other African states were transitioning to multi-party democracy and have now been caught flatfooted with these regressive tendencies. Bishop Mambo urges for an all-inclusive effort and for the actors to say alert in the fight for a democratic world.

"The question is, how do we change that trend because shrinking space is not just a Zambian problem. It is an African problem. It is a global problem, and we need all hands on deck if we are to reclaim this space," says Bishop Mambo.

Journalist Kausa reiterates that political will is a crucial starting point because most constitutions already safeguard these freedoms. The different arms of government, including the judiciary, must also play their role to protect these freedoms. He further adds that the media must play its role effectively as a crucial watchdog to democratic space, transparency and accountability.

Chama "Pilato" Fumba, a leading musician and social activist, that was arrested for addressing an unauthorised rally in 2019, states that people are crucial in reserving the trends. He says that an empowered populace is productive and will safeguard their democratic space and pro-people development. Pilato further urges cross-boundaries collaboration and linkages as an effective way of learning and sharing experiences in countering shrinking space.

Richard Mulonga urges the need for capacity building the actors in effectively using new media and online platforms for innovative advocacy. "We need to fully exploit the full potential of social media as an empowering platform well entangled in all our political and socio-economic interactions," states Richard.





Rising above cultural barriers

When Mary Nkisongoi rose to speak during the 2019 International Literacy Day commemoration in Narok Kenya, there was a cloud of silence among the participants who included representatives from the government. Mary's stage presence, confidence and articulation of issues were outstanding.

When regional Director of Education, took to the stage to make his address, Mary's poise and articulation was the first thing he pointed out. The director asked her jokingly, what she would like to be when she 'grows' up. "I would like to be a doctor, specifically a mid-wife," responded Mary, a 61 - year-old mother of 12, amidst applause mixed with laughter from the over 400 participants.

Mary's story is remarkable as she has done a complete turnaround in less than two years. Mary comes from the Maasai community. In this patriarchal community, women are traditionally considered second fiddle to men. For instance, a woman must walk behind a man regardless, even if they are a couple. A woman can also only speak after a man has spoken, and this can only be after a man has authorised her to speak. These patriarchal structures compounded with low literacy levels among women further exacerbates the situation.

Forum Syd, in partnership with the International

Labour Organization are implementing the Inclusive Growth Through Decent work project in Nakuru and Narok Counties. This project seeks to reduce poverty and improve living conditions through decent work and access to rights-based services among the rural population in the Great Rift Valley. Through the Right(s) Way Forward methodology, an avenue has been provided for the communities to be fully involved in issues that are of importance to them, as they engage in dialogue with the duty bearers.

The project has incorporated women as part of community trainers and facilitators, an action that would have been unimaginable in the recent past. This inclusion has demonstrated that men and women can work together and engage, without one gender disempowering the other. Jointly, this community has undertaken joint mapping and analysis of their needs and developed Community Action Plans that provide a roadmap towards localised desired sustainable changes.

Resultantly, women are now frequently involved in crucial community processes in terms of community needs identification, prioritisation, actions and follow-ups. On several activities, the women have engaged men on reflections on traditional gender norms which is unconventional in this patriarchal societal setting.

"In public barazas (forums) women are now confident to make contributions on issues that affect the community and topics like Female Genital Mutilation previously perceived as taboos," says Dansen Reson, the Assistant Chief - Suswa. The chief also noted that due awareness and the new sense of confidence, there has been increased reporting of cases of gender-based violence as more women and girls are increasingly coming out.

The change is not, however, limited to women alone. Men are slowly starting to support women's engagement in community decision making processes but also seeing shifting gender roles.

“In public barazas (forums) women are now confident to make contributions on issues that affect the community and topics like Female Genital Mutilation previously perceived as taboos.



Peasant Reserve Zones: An opportunity for peace building in rural Colombia

In 2019 we closed the project "Tramo a Tramo", which had the objective of strengthening the capacities of more than 60 peasant organisations that promote the Peasant Reserve Zones (PRZ). Through Peasant Training Schools that were based on shared experiences, peasant-to-peasant interactions, and territorial walks in several peasant reserve zones, we jointly learned about solidarity economy, environmental sustainability and the gender approach to guarantee the perma-

nence of the peasantry in the territory, as well as to trace paths towards food security and sovereignty. The project, implemented with We Effect and the National Association of Peasant Reserve Areas (ANZORC), and funded by the European Union, aimed to strengthen the administrative, financial, and thematic issues of the organisations.

"The peasants, the communities and the families that live within the PRZs start to identify the needs from which they build a development plan, and this way the government is obliged to contribute and promote the implementation of the Development Plan, built mainly by the communities" says William Betancourt, leader from Agroguéjar, peasant organisation from the Caquetá region.

Reincorporation of ex-guerrillas and peace in rural Colombia

In 2019 Hub Latin American & Caribbean initiated two new projects, both funded by the EU Peace fund for Colombia.

The project Tejidos ("Fabrics") is focused on community reincorporation of ex-guerrilla FARC members and local rural communities in four regions of Colombia, and has already developed a baseline diagnose to identify needs, priorities, and also risks for the project's implementation, together with We

Effect (Swedish CSO), Fundación Paz y Reconciliación (PARES), Ecomun and Programa de Estudios Críticos de las Transiciones Políticas (local partners).

The project Comprehensive Rural Development, which is being implemented with another five Swedish CSOs (Diakonia, Swefor, We Effect, Sweden Church and World Lutheran Federation), is based on the achievement of one of the main goals of the Peace Agreement, which is the sustainable and community based development of rural areas in Colombia.



ADVOCACY

As a platform organisation that aims to strengthen civil society in everything we do; advocacy becomes one tool out of many employed to enhance civil society's influence to ensure democratic rights. We defend civic space where it is shrinking and actively engage where space is evolving. We influence decision makers to ensure that political frameworks contribute to a just and sustainable global development.



PHOTO: JEPPE SCHILDER

Take no risks!

Dangerous work environments, child labour, forced displacements and water pollution. Companies may contribute to a wide range of violations of human rights and a destroyed environment around the world, either through their own operations or their suppliers. The risks are particularly high when it comes to extraction of natural resources. How can companies be aware of effects that their own operations or business relations contribute to? Which are the main risks and how should these be addressed?

Forum Syd's digital toolkit "Take no risks" provides an understanding of companies' responsibilities when it comes to human rights and the environment. The material includes concrete examples of the most common risks facing companies with operations across the world as well as practical exercises and links to useful material from civil society organisations, the EU, OECD and UN. The toolkit is targeted to companies and civil society organisations working on sustainable business. It has received a great interest from key actors among them consultants on sustainability, sectoral business organisations and investors.

business toolkit-en.forumsyd.org

Keeping the promise to leave no one behind

To leave no one behind is one of the key challenges in the 2030 Agenda. As world leaders gathered at the UN SDG Summit, Forum Syd together with Concord launched a new icon to stress the urgency of keeping the most important commitment of the agenda. Development aid has a critical role to play in reaching people furthest behind and donors have a responsibility to ensure that aid is being spent in line with the promise to leave no one behind. The report Leave No One Behind: From words to reality in Swedish development cooperation investigates how the commitment impacts Swedish development cooperation and gives recommendations on how to further strengthen its implementation.

Stockholm Civil Society Days with the theme "Change and action to leave no one behind" was one of the major events during the year. Forum Syd was part of the planning committee and arranged two parallel sessions with guests from Colombia and Cambodia. Julián Cortés, ex-insurgent of the FARC-EP, discussed how to fight exclusion in fragile states and shared experiences from the peace process in Colombia. Senglong Youk from the organisation Fisheries Action Coalition Team discussed how civil society empower local communities to protect livelihoods and the environment, and shared challenges and opportunities from the context of Cambodia.



LEAVE NO ONE BEHIND

Demanding Swedish politicians to take lead in EU

Democracy and human rights are under attack, both within and outside the European Union. The election to the European Parliament was a crossroad where values of democracy and human rights were at stake, threatened by nationalist forces that would rather build walls than uphold international law.

The European Union is the world's largest donor and its policies have effects far beyond its borders. It has a responsibility to contribute to democratic societies, where organisations, activists and ordinary people are respected and live in freedom. The election provided a momentum to discuss EU as a global actor. Forum Syd invited Swedish political candidates for the European Parliament to two panel debates on current EU policies on democracy and sustainable development. It was an opportunity to discuss if EU development aid should be used to prevent migration and how Swedish



members of the European Parliament can act in order to promote democracy and respect for human rights in a time when democracy is facing a backlash. In order to convey concrete examples from a country severely affected by a shrinking democratic space, a representative from a civil society organisation in Cambodia was invited as guest speaker. Forum Syd communicated the standpoints of the Swedish candidates in articles on Forum Syd's website and in an opinion piece, demanding Swedish EU parliamentarians to be at the forefront for a EU that stands up for democracy and human rights.



PHOTO: GLOBALPORTALEN

Globalportalen participated in both the Swedish Book Fair and Human Rights Days in order to reach young people with information on how to engage in global issues. Activities included the live-streamed seminar "How to get your dream job in human rights", in collaboration with Sida, FUF and LSU, an activist-themed photo booth as well as interactive activist- and career coaching sessions. These events were part of Globalportalen's strategy to meet youth face-to-face, including those who are not active online. The activities were popular with students and other young people and led to new insights that will help Globalportalen develop live events going forward.

Globalportalen

Standing up for democracy in Almedalen

Do we stand up for democracy as the world changes? This was the focus of Forum Syd's participation in Almedalen. Democratic space in the world has diminished for thirteen consecutive years.

Forum Syd arranged seminars exploring how we stand up for human rights and democracy in this paradigm shift that the world is currently undergoing. With politicians, civil society, business leaders and experts we discussed what Sweden can do to support those who dare to defend their rights, how businesses will revolutionise sustainability to secure our future, and how we ensure that development aid focus on those left behind in a nationalistic world where international cooperation is challenged.



PHOTO: ANNA BLÜCHER FORUM SYD



Emergency call for peace in Colombia

During 2019 Forum Syd in Latin America actively participated in the international information and awareness campaign Emergency Call for a Colombia in Peace, an advocacy initiative from the Space for Peace Cooperation, a platform of 31 international organisations in the country.

The campaign, which lasted from June to December, intended to influence the local governments of the international organisations and the supranational decision-making bodies (EU, OAS, UN) so that they would:

- Continue their support in favour of peace in Colombia
- Maintain the observance of International Humanitarian Law, respect for work and life of the people and organisations that watch over peace and human rights in the country
- Address the Colombian Government to comply with the Peace Agreement and resume the dialogue with the ELN guerrilla.

Photo: Hub Latin America & Caribbean Manager Laura Juliana Bonilla Pinilla moderates a Human Rights and Business debate in Bogotá. Photo taken by Carlos Cárdenas, Forum Syd.

10-year anniversary of the Eastern Partnership

2019 marked the 10-year anniversary of the Eastern Partnership region (EaP) which include: Ukraine, Moldova, Belarus, Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan. Because of this, Forum Syd, in cooperation with the Swedish Institute of International Affairs (UI) and the International Council of Swedish Industry (NIR), arranged a two-day conference to highlight the important collaboration between the countries in the EaP and the EU. The event was financed by the Swedish Ministry of Foreign Affairs and aimed to create a platform for human rights activists, journalists, civil society organisations and representatives from the business sector, to share experiences and discuss current challenges and future oppor-

tunities for the region. The main thematic pillars of the conference were: media freedom, gender equality and good governance and the overarching theme was focused on how the cooperation between the EU and the EaP can be strengthened.

The event gathered around 85 participants with an even representation from the six countries in the Eastern Partnership region as well as the EU. The end-product of the event was a joint input to the European Commission's structured consultation process which stressed what focus areas, from the civil society perspective, that should be prioritised for the cooperation between EU and the EaP, for 2020 and beyond.

A notorious illegal fisherman who turned into a fish activist

Meas Ye of the Kampong Cham Commune was a notorious illegal fisher on the Mekong River. He started in 2004 when he did not have a job and used to commit illegal fishing about 20 times per month, using electrical equipment. He was happy over the easy money and did not care about the consequences for the environment, not even when he got arrested.

"No one could stop me from committing illegal fishing [...] however, I have decided to discontinue the illegal fishing by myself" said Meas Ye.

In 2018, organisation Northeastern Rural Development conducted a public forum, funded by Forum Syd through the Green Ownership Programme, on fishery management and on how harmful illegal fishing is to the fishery and biodiversity resources in the province and region at large. This resulted in local authorities creating a mechanism that let people anonymously report the name of illegal fishers. 14 names were reported, including Meas Ye, and there were up to 40 complaints against him.

Meas Ye was summoned with the other 13 illegal fishers to learn about the importance of conservation work and what illegal fishing does to the sustainability of the fishery resources. Meas Ye could go back home after he signed a written agreement to stop illegal fishing.

"I was ashamed of what I did after I learnt that my acts could destroy the fishery resources for the whole community and that is the reason that I stopped using illegal fishing equipment," said Meas Ye.

To support and encourage Ye, NRD provided him and other farmers in the village with training and technical support on rice production. Meas Ye recognised that illegal fishing is not the only way that he can earn a living and support his family livelihood. Moreover, Meas Ye is willing to contribute back to society by joining community fishery committee in patrolling as he recognised that patrolling is the only way to reduce illegal fishing.



Forum Syd's approach to capacity development is to have a bottom-up perspective where the focus is on strengthening the existing capacities while using different learning perspectives adapted to the context and needs. Within our capacity development framework we have several kinds of learning methods, such as online courses, workshops, conferences, seminars and coaching.



PHOTO: FORUM SYD

Promoting Right(s) Way Forward in Liberia

To enhance the work with the Rights-Based Approach, Forum Syd has continued to promote the integration of the Right(s) Way Forward (RWF) methodology within our interventions and the work of the different partners globally. In the fall 2019, a five days training was conducted in Liberia bringing together a total of forty participants from eleven Civil Society Partner Organisations working in Bomi, Bong and Grand Gedeh counties.

The training was held by a team comprised of staff members from Forum Syd's Hubs in Eastern and Southern Africa and Latin America and the Caribbean. It focused on enabling Forum Syd staff and its partner organisations to together develop their capacities to integrate and implement programmes and projects using the RWF methodology. Through this training, the capacity of the participants to empower marginalised communities and groups to understand their rights, and demand duty-bearers' accountability, inclusion and transparency was enhanced.

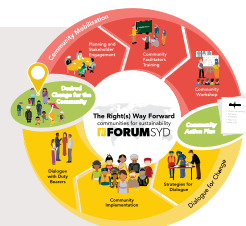
Additionally, participants reflected and shared experiences regarding their understanding of rights issues, gender equality and power dynamics. In this way gaining awareness and understanding of how different forms of

discrimination occur and the importance of the communities taking position as actors of change in their territories.

It was also an opportunity to share initiatives and experiences on how land rights issues are being addressed both in Liberia and Colombia using the RWF methodology. The training therefore added value in terms of holistic sustainable use and management of resources to curtail environmental degradations, protect biodiversity and mitigate the impacts of climate change in Liberia.

The Right(s) Way Forward, (RWF)

is a methodology that aims to increase communities' resilience and ability to lobby and mobilise for the change they wish to see. It departs from the notion that communities themselves have preexisting capacities and localised knowledge. The RWF process assists to determine and deliver on the communities' desired results through participatory methods, rights advocacy and engagement with decision makers. The method emphasises the need for equitable control and distribution of resources between men and women and tries to create constructive and inclusive dialogues.



Social media as a tool for fishery resources management



PHOTO: HOR SAMATH

With a mobile phone camera and a tripod, a man in his sixties is busy taking photos and videos of his community fishery. That is Hor Samath, the Deputy Chief of Sdei Krom, one of the community fisheries in Battambang, Cambodia. Hor Samath devotes his time and energy to capture photos and videos about his community and post on Facebook.

This he does to promote the Sdei Krom community fishery to inspire people to join activities such as cleaning and deepening the protected fish pool or to donate money for the fish conservation. According to Mr. Samath, in 2019 the Sdei Krom community fishery received around 6,000 USD from various donors.

"We inform people and the authority about the importance of fish and flood forest and what they can do to protect natural resources. We also show them the challenges we face besides protecting and informing people. The photos and short videos we produce aim to get attention from people on the problems in the community," said Samath.

In 2016, Samath received training on how to manage Facebook pages as well as photographing and video production by the Village Support Group (VSG) under the financial support from Forum Syd.



Engage. Maintain. Improve.

In 2019 Hub Eastern Europe launched a course with both offline and online elements called "Engage. Maintain. Improve. Improve." for representatives of Belarusian regional civil society organisations. The four months course covered the most urgent issues in the local capacity development such as: financial and human resources sustainability, digital tools and social media, organisation of volunteer work and team building. The main short-term goal of the training was to enhance the civil society organisations financial, outreach and social media competencies. As a result, over 94 per cent of the participants stated the program has fulfilled their expectations.

“It was so unexpected to get much more than expected! In terms of information, and new thoughts in my head, new tasks, experiences and practices! Says one of the participants in the course.

Innovative and international online workshop

In order to face climate change challenges and respond in a creative way, the Sida Partnership Forum (SPF) designed the "Environment and Human Rights Nexus" course as a free-flight workshop. For three days, the course connected participants from four corners of the world; Härnösand (Sweden), Nairobi (Kenya), Bangkok (Thailand) and Bogotá (Colombia). Forum Syd hosted the Bogotá participation, where we participated in the online

global discussions, as well as promoted the local dialogue between the participants from different international organisations, UN entities, and Colombian institutions.

“It was very exciting to be part of this course, and also of this pilot of a free flight course, to experience it and to think about it as well, finding innovative ways of continuing our work within the limits of sustainable development. Camille Risler, UN Verification Mission in Colombia, course participant.



Forum Syd is a religiously and politically unaffiliated not-for-profit development organisation that works for global justice and sustainable development. To achieve this, the equal value of all people and everyone's right to a decent standard of living must be respected and the world's resources used in a sustainable manner.

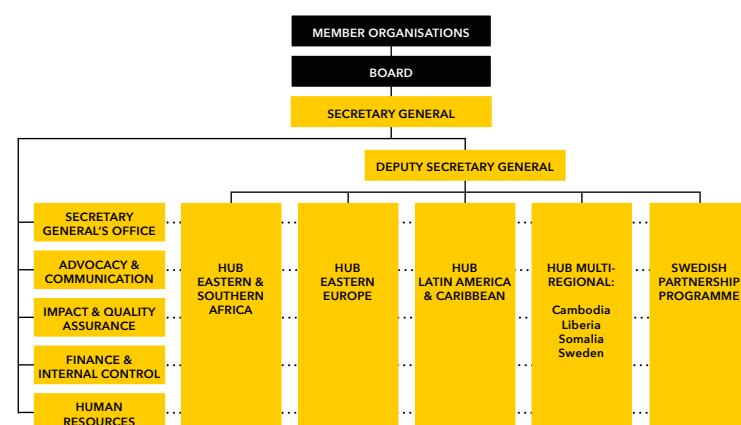
Direction and management | Forum Syd is based in Stockholm. The Annual Meeting is Forum Syd's highest decision-making body where every member organisation has one vote. The participants at the Annual Meeting elect the Board, nomination committee, and auditors based on nominations from the member organisations. Forum Syd's operations are based on the framework that the Annual Meeting decides in the overall Plan for Operations. Forum Syd's day-to-day operations are led by the Secretary General, who is directly accountable to the Board.

In 2019, work continued on the implementation of the new strategy, which includes strengthening Forum Syd's role as a platform for civil society and increasing cooperation with members (the work of the Members Committee established by the Board contributed to this). Also in 2019, the Board:

- held 10 (11) meetings and appointed a Steering Committee which has had 10 (9) meetings
- followed up Forum Syd's internal control and control system
- carried out a bank change which also benefits the members
- evaluated its own and the Secretary General's work

Elected representatives receive compensation for income loss, and remuneration for travel, accommodation and child care, as stated and regulated in the statutes.

Organisation | In 2019, Forum Syd consisted of five functional units and four regional hubs. The former Administration Unit was divided into two new units: HR and Organisational Culture Unit, and Finance Unit. Physical offices are located in Belarus (located in Vilnius), Colombia, Cambodia, Kenya, Somalia (three offices), Liberia and Sweden. During the year all offices worked with direct support to local organisations. Sub-granting to Swedish organisations is handled by the regional hubs based in Vilnius, Nairobi, Bogotá and



Stockholm. At the end of the year, a decision was made to set up a unit responsible for the Swedish Partnership Programme (formerly referred to as the Civil Society Programme), but this will only come into effect in 2020.

Staff | Of Forum Syd's 134 (102) employees, 43 (43) percent are male and 57 (57) percent are female. In 2019, there were 50 (46) employees at the Stockholm office, of whom 24 (32) percent were male and 76 (68) percent were female. Forum Syd has collective agreements in Sweden and staff-related policies and guidelines that apply to all employees in the entire organisation.

Funding | Forum Syd's operations are funded through grants from Sida, the EU, other Swedish authorities, private organisations and through sales and membership fees. Sida Civsam remains the main donor. 5 of the 12 donors were other organisations than Sida (Swedish Council for Higher Education, EU, MAC Foundation, ILO, Government Offices). Forum Syd received responses for 13 (13) applications, of which 7 (8) were approved, 5 (5) were rejected, while 1 application was still pending at the end of the year.

Member Organisations | The member organisations of Forum Syd are Swedish organisations that work to make a difference worldwide and who share our vision. 83 (72) persons attended Forum Syd's Annual Meeting on 18 May 2019 and 47 (32) persons were representatives.

*Numbers in brackets refers to 2018

The number of members as of 31/12/2019 was 147 (137). During the 2019 Annual Meeting Victoria Enström (Svalorna Latinamerika) was elected chairwoman. The overall plan of operations for 2020 was adopted and the Board was given relief of responsibility after the presentation of the Annual Administrative Report. The Member's Meeting in November consisted of a workshop on membership values based on four thematic areas which the member committee carried out. It also included a workshop on climate impact was organised together with a member organisation, as following up on a motion presented to the Annual Meeting in 2019.

Internal improvement processes | In the first half of 2019, both the Secretary General and deputy Secretary General of Forum Syd began their mandates, after a longer period of interim solutions. This had a major impact on work both internally and externally. This work has largely been about building trust. Internally, building trust has been the focus both in terms of developing the working environment, increased communication and dissemination of information, and in clarifying Forum Syd's roles and goals for all employees. Externally, building trust has partly been about improved relations with member organisations. For example, the Secretary General invited to eight informal member meetings in addition to the Annual Meeting and Members Meeting, as well as increasing our visibility and participation in important debates and discussions for the organisation.

A great deal of work to ensure consistency, increase efficiency and control for the entire organisation was started in 2018 and continued in 2019. During the spring of 2019, Sida conducted a System Audit at Forum Syd which showed that, while much is in place, there are parts to improve and work on. This was done both during the second half of 2019 and continues into 2020. During the year, Forum Syd started to implement the capacity development strategy, partly through the launch of the digital course platform called "Changers Hub". Also in 2019, Forum Syd approached fundraising and resource mobilisation in a new way to ensure the right strategy forward. Through an internal inventory of knowledge and ideas, facilitated by a consultant, a Fundraising Strategy has been developed. An update of Forum Syd's Theory of Change has taken place. A more scaled-down model has been developed with input from all offices and the Board. The Theory of Change describes what Forum Syd is, how we work and what changes we wish to see. It is a tool for strategic planning, monitoring and evaluation for all our work and will support us in how we follow up on the changes we contribute to. It is a model of thinking that will contribute to a common understanding of who we are as an organisation. The Theory of Change will be integrated into our Fundraising Strategy, programme development and developed for use in our planning, monitoring and evaluation of programmes.

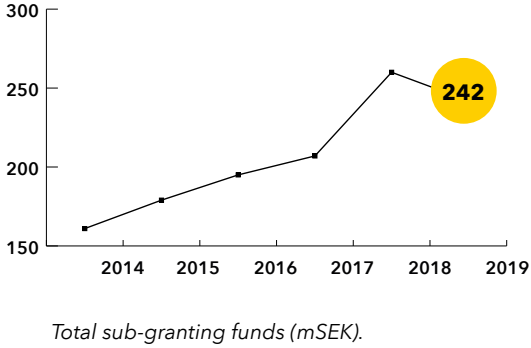
Overview	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015
Framework Sida (mSEK)	267,2	277,2	243,4	222,8	196,1
Funding from other Sida department (mSEK)	85,5	67,6	72,1	80,9	55,8
Other funding (mSEK)	17,2	13,5	12,1	17,4	18,2
Member fees (mSEK)	0,5	0,5	0,6	0,6	0,6
Number of members	134	137	143	149	161
Number of employees, Sweden	50	46	48	52	51
Number of employees, country offices	84	56	62	54	39
Number of country offices	6	6	5	5	5
Number of donors	12	13	12	11	11

Finances 2019 | In 2019, SEK 242 million (SEK 260 million) was distributed to 206 (225) development, trainee, and information projects granted to 140 (127) Swedish organisations. Of these, 57 (60) of the organisations, or 41 percent (47 percent), were members of Forum Syd. The sub-granting was funded by grants from Sida Civsam, Sida Partnership Forum, Sida Europe, Sida Africa, and the Swedish Council for Higher Education (UHR). The projects were carried out in collaboration with local civil society organisations in 67 (66) countries. All projects that are granted funding from Forum Syd must have a rights-based perspective and contribute to both the government's strategies for each grant and to the purpose of Forum Syd.

Development Sub-granting | Development grants are sub-granted to Swedish organisations that engage in development cooperation with civil society organisations in other countries. In 2019, SEK 210 (228) million was sub-granted to 152 (167) projects and programmes that financed development in 67 (65) countries.

Information and communication sub-granting | Information project grants are sub-granted to Swedish organisations that conduct information and advocacy work in Sweden and aim to disseminate knowledge and/or advocate for a just and sustainable world. All projects contribute to one or more of the target areas within Agenda 2030. In 2019, MSEK 24 (24) was provided to 43 (43) Swedish organisations that funded 44 (49) information and communication projects.

Trainee sub-granting | Internship grants are sub-granted to Swedish organisations that wish to place young people abroad for internships. Interns are expected to gain increased interest and understanding of development cooperation and other cultures. In 2019, SEK 8 (8) million was sub-granted to 9 (9) trainee projects in 10 (16) countries.



Raymond Tawonangoro carries his son suffering from Cerebral Palsy in Harare, Zimbabwe. Raymond has been engaged in a project fights discrimination and stigma towards children with disability. Photo: Alamin Mutunga

OUR MEMBER ORGANISATIONS

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