If you are interested in applying for our organisational development support, please make sure to consult the following resources in addition to this concept note:

- Our call overview for applicants
- Our Organisational Development application form
- The overview and video presentation of our OD work

WHY WE SUPPORT ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

What is organisational development....

Organisational development (OD) is a process through which an organisation undergoes internal change, often towards building up its capacity, adapting or improving its strategy, approaches, internal systems, structures and processes, all in order to become more effective in delivering on its mandate and pursuing its objectives.

PeaceNexus’ organisational development support targets organisations that are well positioned to make meaningful contributions to social cohesion and peacebuilding. It is informed by our belief that if we help our partners strengthen core capacities related to strategic direction, management, learning and adaptation, then they will achieve relevant, inclusive and sustainable contributions to the development of peaceful societies.

... and why it is relevant in the Western Balkans?

Civil society in the Western Balkans is vibrant, diverse and has already made great contributions to the social and political development of the region. However, the turbulent and fast-changing political context of the region creates significant internal challenges for organisations, regardless of their size and of the level at which they operate.

We see that many organisations working on social change face challenges related to their strategies, leadership, internal systems and sustainability. In a context where many underlying lines of tensions remain present and where polarisation is on the rise, organisations need to be adaptable and inventive to stay relevant to peaceful democratic development. They need to nurture specific approaches, develop related internal capacities, mobilise resources and networks in order to be effective. Likewise, they need to be able to manage a changing and often adversarial environment for civil society organisations, seldom supported by government institutions and the general public. Few donors provide support for institutional development required for this. While donors increasingly expect their partners to demonstrate both impact on the ground and organisational effectiveness, most provide
short-term, project-based funding that does not help build solid institutional foundations.

PeaceNexus’ OD support seeks to address this gap by providing organisations with the opportunity to invest in internal change processes tailored to their needs and mission.

**WHAT OUR ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT SUPPORT ENTAILS**

**What you can do with our support**

Our support always entails giving organisations the space to think through HOW they work and to develop organisational strategies to improve the quality of their peacebuilding-related work. We favour participatory approaches to organisational development and believe that change can only be successful if those expected to make it happen are actively involved in shaping it. We will start our partnership with a participatory assessment of your challenges and priorities (see also: If selected for OD support, what will the kick-off meeting look like?) On this basis, we will agree on the change objectives you will pursue with our support. Since we know that organisations often have interconnected challenges, the process will be broken down into concrete and achievable steps instead of attempting to tackle all issues at the same time.

The processes we support are diverse and always tailored to the needs of our partners. In practice, our support can for example be used to:

- Engage in a comprehensive strategy development process to review your organisation’s mandate, approach and strategic priorities
- Rethink your advocacy and outreach approaches to mobilise more support for your work
- Review your internal set-up and structure to better align staff roles with (revised) strategic priorities
- Strengthen your governance to increase its internal accountability and alignment with your values and principles
- Strengthen your ability to assess and communicate results and strengthen organisational learning

"After more than a decade of operation and growth in a dynamic environment, it was time for the Metamorphosis Foundation to stabilise and invest in a revised organisational structure and programme strategy. This process required formidable organisational changes unsurprisingly accompanied by discomfort for everyone in the organisation.

PeaceNexus helped us let go of fear and led us through the change process. As a result, we have consolidated our project portfolio into a genuinely coherent and highly strategic programme and built a new more efficient organisational structure."

Bardhyl Jashari, Executive Director of Metamorphosis

**This list is not exhaustive. Other examples and testimonials are available on our website**

**Accompanying organisational development: our approach**

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1 For our lessons learned on this topic, see our Practice Paper on Strategy Development
Since 2009, PN has supported more than 30 partners on OD, including a dozen in the Western Balkans. From this experience, we know that successful change processes require time, resources and dedicated internal and external capacities. Therefore, our support entails:

- **Financial contribution to cover costs directly associated with the process:**
  
  ➢ The budget allocated to each partner is determined by the roadmap which we jointly establish at the beginning of our partnership, taking into account your particular needs, scale of and absorption capacity. The typical budget per phase of support is 20’000 CHF
  
  ➢ Our financial envelope covers the costs of external consultants, as well as expenses directly related to the process such as meeting and travel costs. (see also in the Overview: What is outside of the scope of PeaceNexus OD support and cannot be funded.)

- **Direct process accompaniment from PeaceNexus**
  
  ➢ At the start of our engagement, we will visit you to assess in a participatory way your organisational challenges and what would need to happen internally for you to be able to overcome them. On that basis we will support you in prioritising and sequencing objectives for change, and designing a roadmap for our support.
  
  ➢ We will stay engaged as the process unfolds, including to help you monitor progress, provide feedback and identify when and how to adapt to achieve your objectives.
  
  ➢ To ensure that our accompaniment is responsive, two PN staff members will dedicate their time to you and will be available throughout the partnership to help you steer and manage change - from the first steps of process design to the final steps of implementation.

- **Support in identifying and managing required external consultancies**
  
  ➢ In our experience, working with an experienced OD consultant and having her/him facilitate key moments is an efficient way of enabling reflection, working through difficulties, and moving to action. Where specific technical expertise is required, it may be necessary to bring in thematic specialists too. PeaceNexus staff will assist you in finding the consultant(s) best suited to your needs and identifying required deliverables.
  
  ➢ The consultants accompanying your process will report and be accountable to you, while PN staff will help you engage effectively with and provide feedback to consultants.

In addition, we approach all OD partnerships in line with the following **core principles**

- **Honesty and confidentiality:** An effective partnership is based on mutual trust and learning. We commit to always acting with strict confidentiality and to maintain open and transparent communication throughout our partnership. Since we see our role as one of a “critical friend”, we may at times hold you accountable to your objectives and share frank feedback. On your side, you should feel free to approach us at any time with your own feedback about our accompaniment.

- **Adaptation:** We recognise that the plan we establish at the beginning of our partnership may need modifications along the way. We will stay flexible and help you adapt the plans so that you can achieve your goals.
• **Commitment over time:** If you are making progress but achieving your change objectives requires more time and effort than anticipated, we may extend our commitment to a follow-on phase of support, pending our Board approval. In the past, our support to OD partners typically lasted between 18 months and 4 years.

**INTENDED AUDIENCE**

We welcome applications from all organisations that fulfil the eligibility criteria and want to address internal challenges to maximise their impact on reconciliation and peaceful democratic development. When selecting OD partners in the Western Balkans, we seek out change-makers with a demonstrated potential to challenge the status quo – be it through who they connect, how they work or through the scale of their activities. For example:

• We intend to expand our support to organisations/networks that work regionally and/or connect diverse stakeholders within and across divided communities at the local level. We believe these organisations’ institutional development are heavily affected by unresolved regional and bilateral disputes. We seek to support actors who are looking to use their mandate to bridge divides and provide people with opportunities for meaningful interactions.

• We’re also keen to work with transitional justice and Dealing with the Past organisations who aspire to build local constituencies for their work.

• We recognize that in the region, peacebuilding and democratic development are intrinsically linked. We’re interested in pursuing our support to organizations that safeguard essential liberties (such as media freedom) and mobilise support for meaningful political reforms.

**ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA**

Applicants need to fill all the following eligibility criteria:

- Be a legal entity established in one of the following countries: Albania, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Croatia, Kosovo, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia, and
- Be a civil society organisation, or an organisation from one of the following categories,
  - A local or regional public entity
  - A foundation
  - A multilateral organisation
  - A network
- **And** be directly responsible for the preparation of the application and management of the process if selected (not acting as intermediary), and
- Have a bank account, and
- Confirm that their activities will not violate the USA PATRIOT Act (18 U. S. C. §2339B)

**SELECTION CRITERIA**

- Relevance of the applicant and ability to address issues that undermine peaceful democratic development
We achieve our impact through the work of our partners. Therefore, we need to understand through concrete examples what difference your work makes and to whom. It is important for us to understand where you have already a track record that contributes to peacebuilding and democratic development, and where you see more potential for even more impact.

➢ **Readiness to engage in an organisational development process**

Since an honest self-assessment and open acknowledgment of difficulties is key to the processes we support, we encourage you to be self-reflective and to be upfront in the articulation of your challenges. Through your application, we want to understand what is your current situation and why you want to invest your time and energy in this process. To this end, we’re particularly keen to know how you expect the OD process to contribute to your effectiveness and impact.

**Frequently Asked Questions**

➢ The following general questions about PeaceNexus support and partnership approach are addressed in the Overview and are relevant for all three support areas:

- What can be supported under this call?
- What does PeaceNexus support entail?
- What is outside the scope of PeaceNexus support and cannot be funded?
- What is the application and selection process?
- If we are selected, what will be the reporting requirements of PeaceNexus?

➢ In addition, please read the following frequently asked questions about organisational development

What is the difference between OD and CS and what should we do if we’re not sure which support area is most suitable for us?

As we’ve noted above, our support on conflict sensitivity includes an organisational development approach so there is overlap between these two categories of support. Both OD and CS support aim at strengthening your organisation and entail an internal change process. The differences relates to your organisational mandate and priorities and/or to the lens you’d like to take for your change process:

- If you work directly on addressing drivers of conflict and have a track record in peacebuilding and/or pushing for democratic reforms, then you are particularly welcome to apply for OD support. If your ambitions to contribute to social cohesion are lower or new, then CS support might be a better fit.
- Regardless of your mandate, we encourage you to apply for CS support if your internal challenges relate mostly to how to adapt to your context.
In the end all applications are carefully assessed by the WB team that also work with both OD and CS, therefore applications will not be eliminated merely because of choosing one or other category. If you are selected, we will anyway start with an assessment and jointly determine what kind of process is most adequate for you.

If selected for OD support, what will the kick-off meeting look like?

Should you be selected, we will get in touch and start planning the kick-off workshop with you, agreeing on date, participation and agenda. The kick-off usually 2 days, involves all staff members directly involved in and affected by the process and is facilitated by PeaceNexus staff. The purpose of this workshop is to create a shared understanding of:

- the organisational challenges that should be addressed
- the desired outcome of the organisational change process
- the roadmap on how to get there, based on prioritisation and sequencing of key elements

PeaceNexus staff will write a report of this meeting, with observations and recommendations. On that basis we will jointly finalise the roadmap with an estimated timeline, deliverables, roles/responsibilities, and budget allocations. These elements will be reflected in a Grant Offer Letter which is the contractual reference document for the process.

What if we have several organisational challenges we need to address?

Most organisations face several challenges at the same time, and they are often interconnected. You can include all of them in your application while highlighting what the priorities are in your view. We will use the kick-off meeting to further explore and analyse the status quo. The resulting roadmap will determine what to begin with, and how, and how to structure the further process. As such it is an important element of our process design support. We understand that organisations can only dedicate a fraction of their time and efforts to organisational change processes, and our intention is to make sure that you use that investment wisely and strategically.

If the first cycle leads to results and not all of your challenges have been addressed, we are happy to suggest a follow-on phase of our collaboration to our Board and continue working with you, to ensure that you achieve comprehensive and sustainable results.

What happens if we get stuck or if things go wrong?

Change processes are complex and challenging. If the solution was easily available and implementable, our partners would not call on external help. Therefore, we understand that some processes face resistance or get stuck along the way. If this happens, we do not abandon the process, and we “hold the space” for renewed attempts. We know from experience that organisations that work through resistance can come out at the other end stronger and more effective than ever. If leveraged wisely, difficulties can be great learning opportunities and accelerators for change.

Can you help us if we are in an acute financial crisis?

While some OD processes are triggered by challenges related to financial sustainability or have implications for fundraising, if your organisation is in the midst of a massive funding crisis that
threatens its existence, this is not the right time to engage in OD. Do try to approach us well ahead of such a crisis, or once you have recovered from it.

**We are the country/regional office of an international organisation or network. Can we apply?**

As long as you are working in the Western Balkans and are legally established in the region, you can apply. If this is your case, we will need to understand the broader organisational set-up that you are a part of. However, our support will then only focus on your needs and will have to be fully driven by your country/regional team.

In case you are interested in OD support but are ineligible under this call, please consult regularly our website for the upcoming OD call for international organisations and/or get in touch with our Organisational Development Lead & International Partnerships Manager (carole.frampton@peacenexus.org).