

2023



Western Balkans Call

Support Area 2 -
Organisational Development
(OD)

Concept note & Frequently
Asked Questions

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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 reconciliation and responsible dealing with the past. 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 continue making contributions to reconciliation. They need to nurture specific approaches, develop related internal capacities, mobilise resources and networks in order to be effective. They also need to be able to manage a changing and often adversarial environment in which they are seldom supported by respective governments and the general public. Few donors provide support for institutional development required for this. While civil society organisations are increasingly expected to demonstrate both impact on the ground and organisational effectiveness, many donors provide short-term, project-based funding that does not necessarily help build solid institutional foundations.

PeaceNexus' OD support recognises these challenges and seeks to help organisations build such strong internal foundations and capacities for adaptation. We do so by providing our OD partners 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. 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 process¹ to review your organisation's mandate, approach and strategic priorities
- Rethink your advocacy and outreach approaches to mobilise more support for your work
- Develop a more strategic approach to fundraising
- 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

"In 2020, over two decades from the establishment, KRCT was facing a need to accommodate its growth and experience accumulated over the years in order to prepare for a future of higher impact in its mission of rehabilitation and torture prevention.

PeaceNexus, through their support for our strategical and structural development, has made us bolder to scale up our work and impact nationally and internationally as a human rights organisation"

Feride Rushiti

Founder and Executive Director of the Kosova Rehabilitation Center for Torture Victims

Accompanying organisational development: our approach

Since 2014, we have provided multi-year OD support to more than 15 organisations 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 after the initial kick-off visit, taking into account your particular needs, scale of operations and absorption capacity. The average budget per phase of support is around 25'000 CHF
- Our financial envelope covers the costs of external consultants and possibly additional thematic or technical expertise, as well as expenses directly related to the process such as meeting and travel costs.

- **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 consultant and having them 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 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.
- **Starting from where our partners are at:** we do not prescribe a one-size-fits-all approach but rather tailor our support to each partner’s mandate, challenges, needs and ambitions. We aim to apply a pragmatic and gradual approach to improving systems and practices for conflict sensitivity and greater contributions to social cohesion, taking into account the vision, absorption capacity and internal constraints that are specific to each organisation.
- **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:** The duration of one phase of support phase is approximately one year. However, in our experience, securing sustainable gains in terms of organisational development requires sustained effort. If we see that you are making progress but achieving your change objectives requires more time and effort, we may extend our commitment through up to three phases of support. Most PN partnerships in the Western Balkans extend beyond one phase of support.

INTENDED AUDIENCE

We welcome applications from organisations that want to address internal challenges to maximise their impact on social cohesion and reconciliation. 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 support **actors that work on reconciliation 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, showcase positive examples of collaboration and provide people of different backgrounds with opportunities to build meaningful and trust-based relationships.
- We're also keen to work with **transitional justice and Dealing with the Past organisations** which engage in memory activism, build young people's knowledge about the 90s and advocate for a responsible and principled approach to the legacy of the past. We know these organisations are often undermined by those who benefit from ethno-nationalism and seek to support those who are ready to continue challenging the status quo and aspire to build stronger local constituencies for their work.
- **Organisations and initiatives that protect the rights of minorities as well as their socio-political inclusion.** We know that the combination of the unresolved legacy of the fact with the prevalence of ethno-nationalist narratives can breed the creation of homogenous societies in which the rights and perspectives of minorities are overlooked. We're ready to support organisations that seek to counter these trends and which strive instead for the respect of pluralism.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

In order to be eligible, the applicant needs to fulfil ALL of the following criteria:

- Be based in one of the following countries: Albania, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Croatia, Kosovo, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia, and
- Be a civil society organisation, **or** a grassroots initiative **or** organisation from one of the following categories
 - A local or regional public entity
 - A foundation
 - A multilateral organisation
 - A network
- Be directly responsible for the preparation of the application and management of the process if selected
- 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 contribute to reconciliation**

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 reconciliation, 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 internal challenges. Through your application, we want to understand what your current situation is and why you want to invest your time and energy in this process. We also want to understand what 'success' would look like and 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 both support areas:

- ? We are interested in internal development but have very limited time to engage; should we still apply?**
- ? If we are selected, how will the partnership start?**
- ? 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?**

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 dealing with the past, 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.

We do ask you to apply to only one support area which you feel is a better fit for you. However, all applications are carefully assessed by the WB team that works with both OD and CS. If you are selected, we will anyway start with an assessment and jointly determine what kind of process is most adequate for you. Some of our partnerships combine OD and CS elements.

? 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 PN's Management Team 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 sufficiently recovered from it and are no longer dealing with an emergency situation.

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

As long as you are (partly) based in the Western Balkans, you are eligible to apply. If this is your case, we will need to understand the broader organisational set-up 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).