

Terms of Reference for the final evaluation of the project «A7MINA! Strengthening the role of Palestinian youth as human rights defenders and in the prevention of gender-based violence in vulnerable communities of the West Bank through nonviolence, social art and digital innovation»

1. Introduction

These Terms of Reference reflect the decisions made during the design of the final evaluation proposal for the project «**A7MINA! Strengthening the role of Palestinian youth as human rights defenders and in the prevention of gender-based violence in vulnerable communities of the West Bank through nonviolence, social art and digital innovation**» They serve as the main reference document for the evaluation team that will be conducting the assessment.

The evaluation is promoted and managed by the **Institute Novact of Nonviolence: (NOVACT)**, an organization working to consolidate peace in conflict zones by supporting nonviolent movements and implementing protective interventions for vulnerable communities.

NOVACT envisions a society rooted in human security and nonviolence, free from armed conflict and systemic violence. It promotes nonviolence as a strategy for social transformation toward a peaceful, just, and dignified world.

The project is implemented by NOVACT and is funded by the Agència Catalana de Cooperació al Desenvolupament (**ACCD**) (*Catalan Agency for Development Cooperation*).

Project Objective

The initiative aims to promote the knowledge and exercise of rights by the Palestinian population in especially vulnerable communities by strengthening the action of young Palestinians as Human Rights Defenders and their leadership in the protection and restitution of the population's rights, including in 24 Area C communities and refugee camps in the OPT of the West Bank - including East Jerusalem and rural and Bedouin areas.

The project addresses the chronic protection crisis resulting from the ongoing conflict and military occupation, the systematic violations of International Humanitarian Law and International Human Rights Law, and the lack of accountability mechanisms. A gender and human rights-based approach is applied throughout, alongside tools for nonviolent conflict transformation.

Rationale for the evaluation

This external final evaluation is justified by several key factors:

- **Internal Accountability and Learning:** As part of NOVACT's core commitment to transparency and institutional excellence, this evaluation allows for an independent reflection on the project's trajectory. It provides a structured environment for learning

from both successes and setbacks, leading to improved future programming. This is particularly significant given that the project consolidates the efforts of longstanding NOVACT partners—the Palestinian Circus School (PCS) and Al-Haq—while introducing a pioneering collaboration with Centre Delàs for the first time. The evaluation will analyze how this new tripartite synergy (legal defense, social arts, and international advocacy) has functioned and whether it provides a scalable model for future interventions.

- **Transparency with local partners and beneficiaries:** the evaluation aims to create inclusive and participatory spaces where stakeholders can independently assess the intervention.
- **External perspective:** it brings an objective and critical lens to analyze project outcomes, methodologies, and processes.
- **Adaptation to a deteriorating context:** given the worsening humanitarian and security situation in Palestine and the increasing restrictions on mobility, it is urgent to assess current interventions to ensure they meet the real needs of the population and remain contextually appropriate.

General objectives of the evaluation

- a) **Youth Education and Training in Human Rights:** The evaluation will assess the participation of young people in training initiatives led by NOVACT and its partners. It will use qualitative and quantitative indicators to measure the "multiplication effect"—the ability of participants to reproduce lessons learned and transform them into sustainable community practices.
- b) **Promotion of the Right to Peaceful Assembly and Protection:** This involves evaluating **NOVACT's comprehensive protection approach**, which includes legal and psychosocial support. The evaluation will test the hypothesis that this protection model can be successfully adapted to the Palestinian context. A comparative methodology will be used to identify factors that allow these mechanisms to function effectively despite external repressive factors.
- c) **Youth Leadership through Artistic and Digital Methodologies:** The evaluation will analyze the impact of "Social Circus" and performing arts (in collaboration with the Palestinian Circus School) as tools for community advocacy and the prevention of gender-based violence. Furthermore, it will investigate the hypothesis that **digital tools** can effectively promote youth leadership online when physical public spaces are limited by internal and external repressive factors.
- d) **International Transposition and Advocacy (Catalonia-Palestine):** The evaluation will assess the effectiveness of efforts led by **Centre Delàs** and **Al-Haq** to bridge local Palestinian struggles with international advocacy in Catalonia. It will specifically focus on how digital and offline spaces can be synchronized to defend human rights at the international level.

The final evaluation report may also:

- **Serve as a baseline for future programming:** Since the project explores the role of youth born after the Second Intifada, the report will provide a critical data set on current radicalization dynamics and the viability of non-violent alternatives. This will establish the "ground floor" for NOVACT's long-term strategy in the region.

- **Preserve institutional memory:** In a context of high political and social instability, the report will document the collaborative methodologies developed with **Al-Haq** and the **Palestinian Circus School**, ensuring that the specialized knowledge of "Comprehensive Protection" is not lost due to external disruptions or staff turnover.
- **Act as a reference for good practices in a context of shrinking civic space:** The report will specifically analyze how digital tools and artistic methodologies (like those of the Circus School) can bypass physical and legal restrictions on the right to peaceful assembly in Palestine.
- **Validate the "Comprehensive Protection" Hypothesis:** It will provide a comparative analysis to determine if NOVACT's protection model—which integrates psychosocial, legal, and monitoring components—can be successfully adapted to the unique pressures of the occupied West Bank, rural areas, and refugee camps.
- **Refine Youth-Led Advocacy Models:** By evaluating both online and offline efforts, the report will identify which innovative and artistic methodologies most effectively empower young Palestinians as agents of political change and defenders of human rights.
- **Inform International Solidarity Strategies:** It will assess the "transposition" of local efforts to the international level (specifically in Catalonia with **Centre Delàs**), providing a template for how local Palestinian resistance can be effectively communicated and supported by the global community.
- **Explore the Limits of Non-Violence:** The report will offer a candid, evidence-based reflection on the potential—and the constraints—of non-violent action within the current Palestinian socio-political framework, serving as a strategic guide for NOVACT and its partners.

2. Object of the evaluation and background

The project «**A7MINA! Strengthening the role of Palestinian youth as human rights defenders and in the prevention of gender-based violence in vulnerable communities of the West Bank through nonviolence, social art and digital innovation**» funded by the Agència Catalana de Cooperació al Desenvolupament (**ACCD**) Catalan Agency for Development Cooperation, formally began on **February 1, 2024**, and is set to run for **20 months**, until **28 February 2026**.

The project's **overall objective** is Contribute to the nonviolent transformation of conflicts and to a just and lasting peace in Palestine through strengthening the role of youth in the protection and restitution of the rights of the Palestinian population in vulnerable communities in Area C and refugee camps in the Palestinian Occupied Territory of the West Bank (including East Jerusalem)

Its **specific objective** is to reinforce the Strengthen contribution of Palestinian youth in improving the knowledge and exercise of the Human Rights of population of vulnerable communities in Palestine, including 24 Area C communities and refugee camps in the OPT of the West Bank - including East Jerusalem and rural and Bedouin areas. **The project aims to defend:**

- The **right to peaceful assembly** and,
- The **right of women to a life free from violence**

Expected results:

1. **R1. Reinforced capacities of youth HRDs** to contribute to the improvement of the human rights of population in vulnerable communities, especially on the right to assembly peaceful and women's right to a life free of violence.
2. **R2. Promoted the right to peaceful assembly** through the establishment of (1) systems for monitoring, documenting and systematizing of HR violations in the context of peaceful assembly led by youth and (2) mechanisms for their protection through comprehensive legal and psychosocial support, international advocacy and strengthening of their support networks.
3. **R3. Promoted the leadership of young creators** in the design and implementation of actions for the prevention of GBV and the promotion of women's rights through innovative artistic methodologies based on social circus and theatre and of digital action
4. **R4. Reinforced the role of civil society in Palestine, Catalonia and internationally in advocating** and raising awareness on the HR situation in vulnerable communities in Palestine.

Local Partners:

The project is implemented in collaboration with:

- **Palestinian Circus School (PCS):** a social circus organization active since 2006, that uses performing arts and creative expression to empower Palestinian youth and promote non-violent community leadership.
- **Al-Haq:** an independent Palestinian human rights NGOs that specializes in monitoring, documenting, and legally challenging human rights violations in the OPT.
- **Centre Delas:** A Barcelona-based research center for peace and disarmament that leads the project's international advocacy and awareness efforts, particularly within the Catalanian context.

NOVACT supports these organizations through **nonviolent actions, digital innovation, social theatre,** and **advocacy facilitation,** aiming for sustainable transformation in conflict contexts.

Target groups:

- **Rights-holders:** Palestinian Youth (men and women), including activists, artists, lawyers, researchers, and survivors of gender-based violence from Area C and East Jerusalem.
- **Duty-bearers:** public service providers, civil society organizations, and international institutions (e.g., EU delegations, UN agencies).
- **Responsibility-holders:** young professionals (journalists, lawyers, activists) involved in advocacy platforms.

Key activities:

The project includes training, legal support, awareness campaigns, artistic activities (e.g., social circus), audiovisual production, and advocacy events, all under a **human rights, gender, and nonviolence** framework.

3. Stakeholders involved

The stakeholders participating in the evaluation process will be selected with the aim of providing a holistic view of both the design and implementation of the intervention. To this end, the following actors are considered key participants:

- **Implementing partners:** NOVACT, PCS, Al Haq, and Centre Delas (including technical implementation staff, financial staff, and strategic staff from each organization)
- **Project beneficiaries**
- **Technical service providers:** trainers and facilitators
- **Donor:** ACCD as the main funder

Evaluation management unit: NOVACT. As the grant's implementing entity, NOVACT will represent both itself and the local partner organizations. It acts as the commissioning unit for the evaluation, responsible for validating and overseeing the quality of the process, managing the selection and contracting of the evaluation team, and ensuring the publication and dissemination of the results.

Evaluation steering committee: coordination committee of «**A7MINA! Strengthening the role of Palestinian youth as human rights defenders and in the prevention of gender-based violence in vulnerable communities of the West Bank through nonviolence, social art and digital innovation**» Composed of representatives from the four implementing partners: NOVACT, PCS, Al -Haq, and Centre Delas. **This committee will:**

- Coordinate and facilitate the evaluation process.
- Review the first draft of the final evaluation report.

Coordination with the evaluation team will take place through meetings either with all committee members or in smaller, thematic or geographic groups, as appropriate. All decisions will be made by consensus.

4. Scope of the evaluation

The evaluation will cover the geographical areas where the project was implemented, most of the West Bank governorates. It will also include the **digital space**, as some activities were originally designed for online delivery, while others were moved online due to safety concerns, such as roadblocks, settler attacks, and restrictions on movement.

The digital environment will be analyzed not only as an alternative to physical space, but also as a distinct space capable of creating communities of practice with specific codes and communication norms.

The evaluation will focus on the full implementation period, from **February 1, 2024, to 28, February 2026.**

Key Thematic Areas of Analysis:

The evaluation will concentrate on three core pillars of the project:

- **The gender approach and the human rights-based approach**, integrated transversally: The evaluation will assess how the project successfully mainstreamed the defense of women's rights and the protection of the most vulnerable youth across all activities, ensuring that human rights standards are the foundation of every intervention.
- **The use of innovative methodologies, such as social arts and digital innovation**: A key focus will be analyzing how non-traditional tools—including the social circus techniques of the Palestinian Circus School, LARP (social theater), and digital organizing platforms—have bypassed physical restrictions to foster leadership and non-violent social change.
- **The implementation of community protection mechanisms for monitoring human rights violations in the OPT**: The evaluation will measure the effectiveness of the Comprehensive Protection model, examining how documented evidence (supported by Al-Haq) and psychosocial support have created a safer environment for young people to exercise their right to peaceful assembly.

A **holistic, context-sensitive approach** will be essential to assess the political impact on individuals, communities, and broader societal structures.

Additionally, the evaluation should assess the impact of strategic partnerships with external stakeholders on the effectiveness of protection mechanisms, and provide insights and recommendations on community engagement strategies, particularly those aimed at promoting **youth and women's leadership** in project activities.

5. Evaluation questions and criteria

The evaluation will be guided by a set of key questions organized around thematic areas and aligned with the principles and methodology of NOVACT, its local partners, and ACCD. The gender and human rights-based approaches (HRBA) will be cross-cutting throughout all evaluation criteria.

Main evaluation questions

1. Relevance, effectiveness and strategic coherence

- How well have project strategies aligned with objectives and adapted to context?
- Has the project contributed to nonviolent conflict transformation and the empowerment of youth and women in defending human rights?
- To what extent has the gender approach been effectively integrated? What could be improved?
- Has a human rights-based approach been adopted effectively?
- Are the innovative methodologies (e.g. digital tools, social theatre) appropriate for the Palestinian context?

- Have beneficiary needs been adequately considered?
- Have strategic alliances strengthened community protection?

2. Evaluation of Impact on Young People and Women Human Rights Defenders (HRDs)

- To what extent has the project contributed to strengthening the skills and capacities of young people and women HRDs to act autonomously, effectively, sustainably, and safely, with a gender-sensitive approach?
- How effectively has the project empowered young leaders, researchers, and women professionals (e.g., lawyers) to become agents of change in promoting and protecting human rights within their communities?

3. Impact, protection and human security

- How has the project improved human security, especially for youth and women?
- What protection mechanisms were effective, and which need improvement?
- What actors (local/international) contributed to the project's success?

4. Coordination and project management

- How effective was coordination among partner organizations?
- What best practices have emerged in partnership building?
- How was communication managed internally and externally?

5. Context, adaptability and sustainability

- How has the project adapted to the volatile Palestinian context?
- What measures were taken to ensure long-term sustainability?
- What lessons have been learned to inform future interventions?

6. Community participation and inclusion

- How was community participation facilitated?
- Were strategies implemented to ensure inclusion of marginalized groups?

7. Advocacy and policy impact

- What advocacy strategies were effective at the international level?
- What has been the impact and potential of these strategies?

8. Accountability and financial management

- What were the main challenges in meeting donor accountability requirements?
- How efficient was the use of project resources?

9. Training, capacity building and innovation

- What training programs were implemented and were they effective?
- What innovative elements added value?
- Was the digital space leveraged as a transformative environment?

Evaluation Criteria

1. **Participation:** involvement of all relevant actors across project stages.
2. **Ownership:** level of community and partner engagement and ownership of outcomes.
3. **Relevance:** alignment with local needs, national policies, and international commitments.
4. **Impact:** expected and unexpected results, with focus on transformative effects for women and youth.
5. **Sustainability:** likelihood that results will endure beyond the project, with local capacity in place.
6. **Coherence:** internal consistency and alignment with other initiatives.
7. **Effectiveness:** achievement of planned results considering context and resources.
8. **Efficiency:** cost-effectiveness and resource optimization.

Additional criteria:

9. **Coverage:** reach among the most vulnerable groups in high-risk areas.
10. **Risk management and adaptability:** capacity to manage risks and respond to context changes.
11. **Ethics and transparency:** adherence to ethical standards, accountability, and conflict of interest prevention.

6. Evaluation methodology and work plan

The evaluation team will propose an initial methodological approach and the most appropriate techniques in their technical proposal, clearly justifying their choices and using the information in this document as a reference point. After an initial coordination meeting, the selected team will provide NOVACT with a final, detailed methodology, including a comprehensive plan for the evaluation mission.

However, the following methodological aspects are mandatory:

- The methodology must integrate a **gender perspective** and a **human rights-based approach (HRBA)**.
- The methodology must be **participatory**.
- The methodology must **include all target groups**, especially those that are hard to reach.

The evaluation results and recommendations will be based at minimum on analytical work drawn from the following methods:

- **Document review** of all relevant project materials (e.g. publications, activity reports, interim and final reports).
- **Interviews and/or focus group discussions** with key stakeholders.
- **Technical consultations** with the project implementation staff.
- **Field visits** to assess implementation on the ground.
- **Presentation and discussion workshop** of the first draft report with participation of at least the four implementing partners and the OCE (Spanish Cooperation Office).

Deliverables

- A. Final revised methodology
- B. Data collection and processing tools
- C. First draft of the evaluation report
- D. Workshop for presentation and discussion of the first draft report
- E. Final revised version of the evaluation report

7. Structure and presentation of the evaluation report

The final report should have a **maximum length of 30 pages**, excluding the cover page, executive summary, and annexes.

A **summary sheet** of the evaluation must be submitted, following the donor's official format for their evaluation inventory.

The following is a recommended outline that the final evaluation report should follow:

0. Executive summary

1. Introduction

- Background and purpose of the evaluation
- Key evaluation questions and assessment criteria

2. Summary description of the intervention

- Focus on expectations and progress at the time of evaluation
- Background, organization and management, involved actors, and implementation context

3. Methodology used

- Evaluation methodology and techniques applied
- Constraints and limitations of the study

4. Analysis of collected information

- Evidence in relation to the evaluation questions
- Interpretation of findings based on the evidence gathered

5. Evaluation conclusions

- Based on the evaluation criteria established

6. Lessons learned

- General conclusions that point to good practices
- Key lessons that can be replicated or applied to future interventions

7. Recommendations

- Organized according to the evaluator's chosen criteria (e.g., short/long term, by evaluation criteria, by component or geographic area)
- Each recommendation should, where possible, identify the responsible actor(s)

8. Annexes

Including:

- Terms of Reference (ToR)
- Work plan, team composition, and mission description
- Methodology and data collection tools used, including:
 - Document review: list of secondary sources
 - Interviews: list of interviewees, interview guides, transcripts or notes
 - Surveys: templates, raw data, and statistical analysis
 - Participatory workshops: minutes and outputs
 - Etc.
- Comments and feedback from stakeholders on the draft report, particularly in cases of disagreement not reflected in the main body
- Summary evaluation sheet according to the donor's template

8. Evaluation premises, authorship, and publication

Ethical and professional standards:

- Anonymity and confidentiality: the evaluation must respect participants' right to anonymity and confidentiality when providing information.

- **Responsibility:** any disagreement within the evaluation team or with project stakeholders must be reflected in the report, along with supporting evidence or noted dissent.
- **Integrity:** evaluators are responsible for highlighting relevant issues not explicitly mentioned in the ToR if needed for a comprehensive analysis.
- **Independence:** evaluators must be independent from the project's management or components.
- **Data validation:** the evaluation team is responsible for the accuracy and reliability of the information presented in the report.
- **Rigor:** the evaluation process and deliverables must meet high professional standards.
- **Non-discrimination:** evaluators must ensure no discrimination in engaging with individuals involved in the project or the evaluation.

Incident reporting:

Any challenges during fieldwork or other phases must be reported immediately to the grant executor (NOVACT), who will inform ACCD if necessary. Failure to do so will not justify delays or incomplete deliverables.

Copyright and dissemination:

All copyright belongs to the contracting entity, NOVACT. Dissemination of data and the final report is the responsibility of the grant executor. ACCD retains the right to reproduce and distribute the report for administrative purposes, with prior notice when required for other reasons.

Sanctions:

Delays in delivery or poor-quality outputs may result in penalties or arbitration, as per the contract terms between the evaluator and the contracting entity.

9. Submission of technical proposal and evaluation criteria

The evaluation team must include at least one expert with the following profiles and qualifications:

- **Proven and diverse experience** in peacebuilding and/or the prevention of violence, violent conflict, or violent extremism.
- **Proven and diverse experience** in the field of women's rights and in applying a Human Rights-Based Approach (HRBA).
- **Minimum of 3 years' experience** in evaluating projects funded by international donors.
- **At least 3 years' experience** working in the region and knowledge of the Palestinian context.
- **Theoretical and practical knowledge** of gender mainstreaming and human rights-based approach
- **Excellent command** of spoken Arabic and written/spoken English; knowledge of Spanish (written and spoken) is an asset.
- **Excellent understanding** of project cycle management principles and working methodologies.

- **High standards of rigor and professionalism.**

At least one of the proposed experts must have **strong expertise and practical experience** in integrating a gender perspective and human rights based approach into the evaluation of development cooperation projects.

The composition of the team must be **balanced**, ensuring adequate coverage of all aspects outlined in the Terms of Reference, including cross-cutting issues (gender equity, youth, and human rights).

The application must include, in **Spanish or English**, at least the following documents:

- **CVs of the evaluation team**, clearly demonstrating the required profiles;
- A **technical proposal**, including a methodological note outlining how the evaluation will be conducted in accordance with this document;
- A **detailed financial offer**, including all mission-related costs and taxes (final price).

The quality of submitted proposals will be evaluated based on the following scoring and criteria:

- **Evaluator profiles (40%)**: based on the qualifications and experience outlined above.
- **Methodological proposal (40%)**: based on its alignment with this document, rigor, professionalism, and feasibility.
- **Financial offer (20%)**: based on the suitability of the proposal within the available budget.

10. Budget and payment schedule

The **estimated budget** for conducting this evaluation is **€ 9,000 (Nine thousand euros)**, **all taxes included**. This amount includes all costs associated with carrying out the evaluation: materials, per diems, travel expenses, and professional fees. Payments will be made as follows:

- **20%** upon signing the contract with the external evaluation entity and submission and approval of the inception report (work plan).
- **30%** upon validation of the first draft of the evaluation report.
- **50%** upon submission of the executive summary and final evaluation report in the required format.

11. Evaluation timeline

The revised timeframe for the completion of this evaluation is **14 weeks**, starting **from April 2026**, following the conclusion of the project's planned implementation period. This timeline **may be subject to change** in case an **extension** of the project period is required. Any such changes will be communicated promptly to the contracted evaluation team.

12. Proposal submission:

The evaluation proposal must be submitted along with the annexes listed in section 9 in PDF format to the following email address: viola@novact.org

The deadline for submission of applications is 1.4.2026. Applicants must send the application file by e-mail to viola@gmail.com stating "PdP_Evaluation proposal_NAME OF THE CANDIDATE" as the subject.

The application file must include a copy, in PDF format, of the following documents:

- **CVs of the evaluation team**, clearly demonstrating the required profiles;
- A **technical proposal**, including a methodological note outlining how the evaluation will be conducted in accordance with this document;
- A **detailed financial offer**, including all mission-related costs and taxes (final price).

If you have any questions about this call for services, please contact maria.soler@novact.org

E-mail will be the only channel of communication with applicants.

The decision will be communicated to the unsuccessful applicants.