

Terms of Reference

Programme Evaluation of forumZFD Palestine and Israel Regional Programme From 2021 – 2025 (5 years)

I. Organizational Overview

Forum Ziviler Friedensdienst e.V. (forumZFD) is a non-profit peacebuilding organization with its Head Office in Cologne, Germany, which supports people involved in violent conflicts on the path to peace and strives to help overcome war and violence. forumZFD is currently working with peace consultants in Germany, as well as 12 other countries in Europe, the Middle East and Southeast Asia. Through dialogue events, educational work and campaigns, forumZFD actively advocates civil peace policy. The organization finances its work through public and private grants, donations and membership fees.

forumZFD is a member of the Civil Peace Service (CPS) – a German government-funded programme that promotes nonviolent conflict transformation by sending trained peace experts to regions affected by crisis and violence. We promote nonviolent transformation of conflicts, especially in war and crisis zones by supporting local partners in areas such as dealing with the past, peace education or environmental peacebuilding. Through our training programmes and fieldwork, forumZFD helps build long-term structures for peaceful conflict transformation. In the Middle East, there are forumZFD programmes in Lebanon, Iraq, Jordan, and Palestine and Israel.

II. The Palestine and Israel Regional Programme

forumZFD's Palestine and Israel regional programme started more than 25 years ago. From the beginning, forumZFD has cooperated in this regional programme with the Willy-Brandt-Center (WBC). Both organizations are implementing this CPS-programme together, with forumZFD as the lead organisation. The two offices in Jerusalem have together 14 national and international employees.

In the past years, the overall context has changed drastically in Palestine and Israel. The war in Gaza following the Hamas attack of 7 October 2023, as well as the escalation of violence in the West Bank, have severely restricted the space for civil society actors. The situation in the West Bank continues to deteriorate due to military operations and increased violence from Israeli settlers. Freedom of movement for Palestinians is heavily restricted, with far-reaching implications for daily life and civic engagement. These developments have deepened polarization within and between Israeli and Palestinian societies and further limited civic discourse. In addition, repression from both Israeli and Palestinian authorities makes it increasingly difficult for individuals and organizations to voice critical opinions.

Despite these challenges, the forumZFD programme has continued its work under conditions of high political pressure and growing security risks, while new civil society initiatives in Palestine and Israel have emerged that are committed to developing and strengthening nonviolent narratives. The rapidly changing environment requires strategic adaptation of the programme.

III. Scope of Work

forumZFD Palestine and Israel Regional Programme has implemented the last project cycle from 2019-2024, and is currently implementing a new project cycle from 2024-2027. These two proposals cover various activities and engagements that aim to reach context-specific programme outcomes, and are guided by a set of process indicators and programme strategies.

Since 2021, several key events/turning points have affected the programme, including the 11-day war in Gaza in 2021, the October 7th Hamas attack in 2023 with the subsequent devastating war on Gaza, and the increasing violence of the occupation of the West Bank, including East Jerusalem. In addition, there have also been several internal changes that further affected the programme, including multiple evacuations of international staff members, and changes in programme management in both forumZFD and WBC.

With the transition from one programme cycle to the other at the end of 2024, the programme carried out a Systemic Conflict Analysis (SCA) in early 2025 to recalibrate the articulation of its outcomes, process indicators and strategies which were intended to guide the programme until 2027.

To formulate future programme priorities and strategies for a follow-up proposal for 2027-30, forumZFD is commissioning evaluation expert/s to conduct an external programme evaluation.

IV. Main Objectives of the Evaluation

After operating in Palestine and Israel for more than 25 years and to inform the formulation of new outcomes and programme strategies, as well as to assess the cooperation with various stakeholders and partner organizations, forumZFD Palestine and Israel Regional Programme seeks to:

- Evaluate the implementation and impacts of the programme strategies covering the timeline of 2021 to 2025 (5 years);
- Reflect on the programme's approaches in handling internal and external changes;
- Assess the programme's partner structure and identify areas of improvement to maximize impact;
- Assess programme team structure and identify areas of improvement to maximize team function;
- Assess the link and dynamics between the different levels of structures within the programme and between the involved organisations and other relevant stakeholders;
- Identify best practices, challenges and lessons learned; and
- Consolidate recommendations for future cooperation.

The evaluation will assess both programme strategy and programme structure/configuration based on the following selected criteria from the organization's PMEL Minimum Requirements that are also based on the OECD-DAC criteria for evaluating peacebuilding work, including questions to be addressed:

1. **Relevance:** the extent to which the programme/project responds to the needs of the peacebuilding process. It evaluates if the programme/project was based on an accurate (and updated) analysis of

the conflict. Does it address relevant causes of conflict and key dynamics and driving factors? Are the stated outcomes and outputs relevant to the issues central to the conflict? Do activities and strategies fit the outcomes?

2. **Impact:** In general, this criterion identifies and evaluates the effects (long-term, directly/indirectly, intended/unintended) of a programme on peacebuilding and the conflict environment or the effects of the project/programme on the key driving factors and actors of the conflict. If it is too early to expect significant impacts, focus can be on the outcomes and test the theory of change and programme logic to assess whether the current programme strategy is likely (in the long run) to contribute to peace. At the project level, this could mean narrowing down to the output and output indicators to see tangible and short-term changes.
3. **Sustainability of a project/programme** asks if the benefits will last after the intervention has been completed. It also includes partner 'ownership' of the process towards achieving peace. In a conflict context, it also refers to 'spoilers' who have an interest in prolonging the conflict. For the evaluation, the focus will be on asking which steps have been or should be taken or are planned to create long-term processes, structures, and institutions for peacebuilding. Has a meaningful 'hand over' or exit strategy been developed with partners or actors that enable these partners to build or continue their own peacebuilding initiatives?
4. **Efficiency:** this assess how economically resources and inputs (funds, expertise, time, etc.) are converted into results, and asks the question: is this way of working the most efficient? Does the programme/project deliver its outputs/outcomes in an efficient manner (results against costs)? How efficient is the general management of the programme/project (technical team, management, organizational and operational structure)? How does the programme/project compare costs to other options for achieving the same goals?

VI. The Task

forumZFD seeks to work with a team of evaluators, bringing the following competencies:

- fluency in German, English, Hebrew and Arabic;
- ideally a very good working knowledge of the Civil Peace Service (CPS);
- an excellent understanding of the current political dynamics and dimensions in Palestine and Israel along with the German context as it relates to it; and
- local expertise with very good working knowledge of the conflict context and local actors.

The evaluators will be supported by the evaluation management team (forumZFD Head of Programmes, Regional Director and PMEL advisor) for general guidance, and by the admin-finance team in the Jerusalem and Cologne offices.

The evaluators selected will be given time to develop the inception report in consultation with forumZFD. The inception report contains the purpose of the evaluation, the main questions, the evaluation

approach/methodology, structure of the evaluation report and the workplan or timetable. The evaluators will assess the programme, contribute to organizational learning, and formulate recommendations, that will support the further development of the forumZFD program in Palestine and Israel.

VII. Duties and Responsibilities

Evaluators:

1. Inception Phase (Dec 2025), including:

- Conduct desk research to define scope of work, opportunities and constraints, and to fill informational gaps against the evaluation objectives. This includes review of relevant programme documents;
- Fine-tuning of the objectives of the evaluation;
- Timeline for the evaluation, including details on schedule of travel;
- Methodology to be used for data collection (including questions for (semi-)structured interviews); and
- Suggested structure of the final evaluation report.

2. Data collection and analysis (Jan – Feb 2026)

- Arrange interviews with relevant staff members, partners, and other stakeholders, with the assistance of forumZFD and WBC;
- Conduct surveys to complement the qualitative data collection, capturing insights not only on conflict perceptions but also on programme strategy and structure as well; and
- Conduct comprehensive analysis of qualitative and quantitative data collected, and triangulate the analysis for validation.

3. Validation and reporting (Mar 2026)

- Critical review of existing/current Systemic Conflict Analysis and other relevant programme and project documents;
- Submit first draft of evaluation report for review by management on 15.03.2026; and
- finalize report by 31.03.2026.

forumZFD:

- Support and guidance to the evaluation team.
- Provide input on the inception/evaluation plan.
- Give access to relevant programme and project documentation.
- Supply the contact details of stakeholders and all current and – where permissible, former – staff members of the programme (forumZFD & WBC) to be contacted for the evaluation.
- Provide input and feedback during the execution phase of the evaluation.
- Support in the conduct of a validation session.

VIII. Methodology

The methodology will adhere to the following principles: participatory, cultural and gender sensitivity, committed to building capacities, affirming and positive while being honest and constructively critical, valuing approaches.

IX. Budget and Workplan

The evaluation will be carried out within the timeframe of sixty (60) working days, including research, inception report, travel, interviews, analysis, and reporting. forumZFD has a **maximum of €50,000.00 gross** available to cover a team of experts/consultants, with maximum one (1) travel to Jerusalem and one (1) visit to each Head Office in Germany (Cologne and Berlin) to conduct interviews, surveys, etc.

ForumZFD will pay for travel in economy class via the most direct and economical route and reimburse the Contractor on the basis of the Federal Travel Costs Law of the German government (Bundesreisekostengesetz).

X. Timeline

12 th November 2025 (midnight)	End of Call for Applications
21 st / 22 nd November 2025	Conduct of interviews, decision making, contract with evaluation team
Dec 2025 – February 2026	Conduct evaluation
March 2026	Drafting, validation and submission of final report

XI. Application

Interested candidates are requested to send in the following documents by 16 November 2025:

- motivation letter;
- resume;
- evaluation proposal, including work plan, describing your approach to this assignment, suggested methodology, and indicating your requested remuneration; and
- relevant samples of previous evaluation assignments preferably on peacebuilding projects, including contact details of references.

Please upload applications on our website as one document.

For clarifications on the task and the process, applicants are welcome to contact the forumZFD Palestine and Israel programme, through email address jerusalem@forumzfd.de.