

## **Terms of Reference**

### **Baseline Study & Perception Survey**

***Supporting Civil Society Organizations and Media to  
foster community resilience and social cohesion***

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## 1. Context

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Over the past two years, the situation in Israel and Palestine has significantly deteriorated, with a marked escalation in violence, displacement, and humanitarian needs. Large-scale hostilities resumed in October 2023, resulting in civilian harm and significant destruction. Humanitarian access remains limited, and the space for civil society activity has narrowed in both contexts. Despite these challenges, Israeli and Palestinian organizations committed to peace and justice continue their work on the ground under growing political, administrative, and financial pressures.

In this context, the *Empowering Palestinian and Israeli Civil Society and Media* project led by Expertise France, in partnership with Canal France International (CFI) and with support from the European Union (EU), aims at **strengthening the role of civil society and media**. The project responds to the need for rapid response approaches that go beyond traditional models, which have often failed to address structural inequalities and entrenched power asymmetries. The overall objective of the project is to contribute to creating a more conducive environment for sustainable coexistence by strengthening Israeli and Palestinian civil societies and supporting independent media in advancing dialogue, mutual understanding, and collaboration.

## 2. About Expertise France

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Expertise France is the French international development cooperation agency, created in 2015. Expertise France is part of the Agence Française de Développement (France Agency for Development, AFD) since 2022. It designs and implements projects which aim to contribute to the balanced development of partner countries, in line with the Sustainable Development Goals of the 2030 Agenda.

EF's Stabilization and Resilience Unit has been implementing programs in crisis and conflict settings since 2013, positioning itself as a leading organization in supporting the recovery, stabilization, and resilience of vulnerable populations in fragile contexts.

## 3. The project

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Expertise France, with support from the European Union's Foreign Policy Instrument (FPI), is launching a 18-month project that aims at **empowering Civil Society and Media to foster community resilience and social cohesion**. The project aims at strengthening the role of civil society and media, both historically underutilized in the mediation and peace processes between Israel and Palestine in spite of their critical role in empowering diverse voices across Gaza, the West Bank, East Jerusalem and Israel, and the diaspora. The project responds to the need for inclusive, justice-oriented approaches that go beyond traditional models, which have often failed to address structural inequalities and entrenched power asymmetries.

**The overall objective of the project** is to contribute to creating a more conducive environment for sustainable peacebuilding by strengthening Israeli and Palestinian civil societies and supporting independent media in advancing dialogue, mutual understanding, and collaboration.

**The project is structured around two sub-objectives** that focus on reducing immediate tensions and fostering gradual steps towards peaceful coexistence between communities in Israel and the oPT:

- **Sub-objective 1 (SO1):** to sustain and amplify the voices and actions of Israeli and Palestinian civil society - including community leaders, diaspora, youth, and women – through initiatives that promote dialogue, reduce tensions, and foster mutual understanding within their communities and amongst different communities.
  - *Output 1.1:* CSOs demonstrate strengthened capacity to lead and implement peacebuilding initiatives
  - *Output 1.2:* Peacebuilders have strengthened resilience and access to trauma support, enabling sustained engagement in conflict-affected environments
  - *Output 1.3:* Communities experience incremental progress toward peace through CSO-led collaborative projects and intra-community dialogue
- **Sub-objective 2 (SO2):** to support independent media actors in fostering a more pluralistic and informed public debate, combating disinformation, and facilitating collaboration with civil society to enhance peacebuilding efforts.
  - *Output 2.1:* Independent media actors maintain operational resilience and continue delivering unbiased information amidst external pressures
  - *Output 2.2:* Media actors produce and disseminate quality, fact-based information that counters disinformation and hate speech
  - *Output 2.3:* Palestinian and Israeli media stakeholders engage in exchanges, building trust and addressing shared challenges

The short-term vision of the project is **to reduce tensions and foster mutual understanding between Israeli and Palestinian communities by supporting civil society actors and independent media** in their efforts to support dialogue and counter dis/misinformation. By supporting local activists and CSOs, as well as independent media, the project aims to **lay the groundwork for de-escalation** and to **create safe spaces for open dialogue and action** that bring tangible, incremental progress toward reducing hostility, rebuilding trust, and promoting narratives that encourage coexistence.

The long-term vision is to foster **gradual steps toward peaceful coexistence by building resilient, empowered civil societies capable of leading sustained peacebuilding efforts**. The project seeks to create the conditions for enduring peace by cultivating relationships, strengthening the capacities of peacebuilders and supporting independent media actors, which will be able in turn to enhance democratic liberal actors to influence, give citizens a voice and ask for accountability.

All supported initiatives will align with the vision of a two-state solution grounded in mutual security, justice, and respect for the rights and dignity of all communities. The project prioritizes **youth- and women-led initiatives**, as well as other **marginalized local voices**.

The project targets primarily the **West Bank, Jerusalem, and Israel**, and may be expanded to Gaza and the diaspora depending on the context and the feasibility.

## 4. Objective of the Consultancy

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### 4.1 Purpose

In the context of this project, Expertise France is looking for a Consultant or a team of Consultants to lead the initial baseline study and the perception survey for this project. **It is expected from the Consultant(s) to combine data collection and produce two distinct reports.**

The **Baseline Study** aims to establish a clear reference point for assessing the impact of the project on civic space and peacebuilding dynamics in Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories (oPT). It will capture the current state of civil society engagement, their level of access to civic space, and the inclusion of marginalized groups. The findings will inform the design, targeting, and adaptation of project activities, ensuring they are context-sensitive and responsive to the needs of local actors. The baseline will provide measurable values and references against which the indicators and outcomes will be evaluated.

The baseline study will also assess the operational environment for independent media actors, including access to information, freedom of expression, and exposure to censorship or intimidation. It will also identify barriers to media collaboration within and across communities

The **Perception Survey** seeks to understand how various stakeholders, including civil society actors, community members, and other local voices, perceive key issues related to justice, peacebuilding, and civic space in Israel and the oPt. Through structured surveys, focus group discussions, and key informant interviews, it will systematically capture both quantitative data (levels of trust, sense of security, attitudes toward dialogue) and qualitative insights (narratives, expectations, and lived experiences).

The survey will pay particular attention to youth, women, and other marginalized groups, ensuring their perspectives are represented. The expected results include:

- A mapping of prevailing perceptions of justice, accountability, and inclusion within and between communities.
- Identification of harmful narratives and drivers of mistrust that undermine peacebuilding efforts.
- Insights into entry points and opportunities for dialogue, collaboration, and trust-building.
- Baseline perception indicators that can be compared over time to measure changes throughout the project.

This Perception Survey complements the Baseline Study by providing a qualitative and perception-based dimension that highlights contextual complexities and lived realities. Its findings will directly inform engagement strategies, guide the design of dialogue and media initiatives, and ensure that activities are locally relevant, conflict-sensitive, and responsive to evolving perceptions.

## **4.2 Expected methodology**

The consultancy will apply a mixed-methods design, combining quantitative and qualitative tools to produce a robust baseline study and perception survey. Both exercises will be mutually reinforcing and analysed within a single framework, ensuring comparability of indicators, complementarity of findings, and coherence with the project's theory of change.

### **Design and Integration**

- The baseline and perception survey will be designed together, with shared indicators, consistent sampling units, and an indicator mapping table linking baseline variables to the project log frame.
- Quantitative and qualitative data will be collected simultaneously and integrated during analysis, enabling triangulation of findings.

### **Sampling Strategy**

- The consultant will propose a clear sampling design covering occupied Palestinian Territories (with Gaza included if feasible, through local partners or remote methods) and Israel.
- Stratification will be applied (by geography, gender, age, displacement status, CSO/media affiliation).
- Sample size justification will be provided (precision levels or pragmatic saturation).
- Design weights and non-response adjustments will be computed and shared in a weighting file.

### **Data Collection Instruments**

- Quantitative tools will include structured questionnaires (EN/AR/HE), piloted and revised prior to full rollout.
- Perception survey modules will capture trust, sense of security, openness to dialogue, exposure to (mis/dis)information, and attitudes toward civic participation.
- Add modules on media consumption habits, trust in media sources, and exposure to dis/misinformation.
- Qualitative tools will include semi-structured interview guides and focus group protocols tailored to different segments (youth, women, CSOs, journalists, editors, if possible media watchdogs media, community leaders).

### **Enumerator Training and Fieldwork Supervision**

- Local enumerators will be trained on research ethics, informed consent, gender and conflict sensitivity, and trauma-informed interviewing.
- Supervisors will ensure daily review of completed surveys, spot checks, and 10% back-checks to guarantee data quality.

### **Data Management and Ethics**

- A GDPR-compliant Data Management Plan (DMP) will be submitted at inception, covering lawful basis, minimization, encryption, storage in the EU/EEA, retention/deletion, and anonymization of all datasets.
- Anonymized datasets (CSV/XLSX), a codebook, and syntaxes/scripts of analysis will be submitted with the draft report.
- Informed consent scripts (EN/AR/HE) will be developed and piloted. Participation will be voluntary, with the right to withdraw at any time.

- Safeguarding and PSEAH protocols will be applied, including referral pathways for GBV/MHPSS cases and a complaints mechanism.

#### Conflict Sensitivity and Do-No-Harm

- A field risk assessment will be conducted prior to data collection.
- Sensitive questions will be phrased neutrally, with gender-matched enumerators as needed.
- The methodology will ensure inclusivity of marginalized groups (youth, women, displaced, persons with disabilities) and accessibility of venues.

The baseline study and perception survey will adhere to principles of **confidentiality, do-no-harm, and informed consent**, and will integrate a **gender-sensitive and conflict-sensitive lens** throughout the design and data collection processes. Local researchers or facilitators with contextual expertise will be prioritized to ensure cultural appropriateness, trust-building, and access to communities.

#### 4.3 Expected Deliverables

Deliverable	Description	Format	Due Date (Indicative)
1. Inception Report	Detailed methodological note outlining tools, sampling, timeline, ethical considerations, and a brief desk review	10 pages document	Week 1
2. Data Collection Tools	Finalized questionnaires, FGD/KII guides, protocols translations (EN/AR/HE), and enumerator training manual	Word / Excel	Week 2-3
3. Draft Baseline & Perception Report	Analytical brief presenting key indicators, findings, and baseline values; and key findings of perception survey	10 pages max word document ; and raw datasets	Week 4-5
4. Full Baseline & Perception Report	Comprehensive report presenting baseline indicators, values, and trends related to civic space and peacebuilding dynamics. Must include an <b>executive summary (2–3 pages)</b> highlighting key findings and implications + Full report analyzing community perceptions, trust levels, harmful narratives, and opportunities for dialogue, with annexes (qualitative tools, coding framework, transcripts). A single 4-page policy brief consolidating the <b>key findings of both the baseline study and the perception survey</b> , with concise recommendations for the project	50 pages max word document	Week 6-7

5- Feedback from Expertise France	The EF team provides structured feedback on the consultant's draft outputs (baseline, survey design, reports, findings, etc.)		Week 8
6. Final Presentation to Stakeholders	PowerPoint presentation of main findings for project team and partners; executive summary of both reports	PowerPoint / PDF	Week 9

Once the draft is submitted and reviewed, Expertise France may decide based on the quality of the draft whether the consultant may be required to revise the draft, working closely with the Project Manager. Raw datasets are expected to be submitted to Expertise France along with the draft report. The report should be submitted electronically in a MS Word document. The consultant is responsible for English editing and formatting of the final report.

## 5. Expected Timeframe

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The Consultant is expected to start on 29 October 2025. The timeframe for this consultancy spans until 5 January 2026 (2 months).

## 6. Required Profile

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- Proven experience in designing and conducting baseline studies, perception surveys, or similar assessments in conflict or post-conflict settings.
- Strong expertise in peacebuilding, civic space, human rights, and/or civil society engagement, particularly in fragile or politically sensitive contexts. Experience working with civil society organizations, grassroots actors, and marginalized groups, including youth, women, and displaced populations is an asset.
- Experience working with independent media actors or media development organizations in conflict-affected settings is a strong asset.
- Demonstrated knowledge of the Israeli-Palestinian context, including political, social, and humanitarian dynamics (experience in both Israel and the oPT is a strong asset).
- Advanced skills in mixed-methods research, including survey design, qualitative interviewing, focus groups, participatory methodologies, and data analysis.
- Excellent analytical and writing skills, with the ability to produce clear, actionable reports in English.
- Strong ethical and conflict-sensitive approach to data collection and stakeholder engagement, including familiarity with “do no harm” and safeguarding principles.
- Fluency in English is required; working proficiency in Arabic and/or Hebrew is highly desirable.
- Availability to travel to the field or to closely coordinate with local researchers and enumerators in Israel and the oPT.
- Ability to work under tight deadlines and deliver high-quality outputs within a defined timeframe.



## 7. Application process

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Interested candidates must provide the following:

- Technical proposal (max. 10 pages) outlining the understanding of the assignment, the methodology, the approach, a proposed timeline and the profile of the Consultant or the team.
- Detailed financial proposal including daily rates, field data collection, travels and any other expenses.
- CVs of the consultant(s)
- Two samples of a past assignment.

Proposals must be submitted no later than 29 October 2025, 23:59 CET, through Expertise France portal.

## 8. Selection Criteria

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The applications will be evaluated against the following criteria:

Evaluation Criteria	Sub-Criteria	Max Score	Weight (%)
<b>1. Technical Expertise and Qualifications</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Relevant academic and professional background</li><li>• Thematic expertise (peacebuilding, civic space, human rights), media, journalism.</li><li>• Contextual knowledge of Israel and the oPT</li></ul>	30	30%
<b>2. Methodological Approach</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Clarity and relevance of proposed methodology</li><li>• Use of mixed methods</li><li>• Ethical and conflict-sensitive approach</li></ul>	30	30%
<b>3. Experience in Similar Assignments</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Proven experience with baseline studies/perception surveys</li><li>• Past work with CSOs and marginalized groups</li><li>• Quality of previous deliverables</li></ul>	20	20%
<b>4. Team Composition and Local Presence</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Complementarity of team members</li><li>• Language skills (English required; Arabic/Hebrew an asset)</li><li>• Local presence or collaboration with local researchers</li></ul>	10	10%
<b>5. Financial Proposal</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Cost-effectiveness Transparency and clarity of budget</li></ul>	10	10%
<b>Total</b>		<b>100</b>	<b>100%</b>

## 9. Contact details

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For any question related to this study, please contact **Gabrielle Malafosse**, Project Manager, Expertise France ([gabrielle.malafosse@expertisefrance.fr](mailto:gabrielle.malafosse@expertisefrance.fr)). Requests for clarifications are open until 22 October 2025, 23:59 CET.