

## Terms of Reference for the Evaluation of the project “Support to activities of the EaP CSF in 2018-2020”

### Information about the organisation and the project

**The Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum (EaP CSF)** brings together CSOs from six EaP countries and EU CSOs active in the EaP, providing a platform for experience-sharing and partnership building. The EaP CSF works to make the Eastern Partnership a democratic, prosperous and peaceful region committed to European values and standards where civil society is an integral part of democratic governance and an active participant of democratic reforms. The EaP CSF strives to ensure effective participation of civil societies of Eastern Partnership and the EU in the process of planning, monitoring and implementation of the Eastern Partnership policy in constructive dialogue with the EU and EaP decision-makers, in the direction of the democratic transformation and European integration of EaP.

The Forum counts over 1000 representatives of CSOs that took part in its work since 2009. The activities are organised in the format of National Platforms (NPs) in each EaP country and thematic working groups that work in parallel to the EaP intergovernmental platforms. The CSOs from the six EaP countries and EU MSs participating in five CSF Working Groups provide input to the intergovernmental platforms, produce thematic research and indices with regional focus, conduct monitoring of the implementation of their governments’ commitments and carry out regional projects. On an annual basis, the Forum is engaging around 170 civil society organisations from the partner countries and EU member states in the regional (multi-country format). On the country level, via six NPs that unite more than 500 CSOs in total, the Forum advocates for reforms, strives to hold governments to account, fosters democratic values and human rights, promotes the goals of the EaP and monitors its implementation.

The Forum is recognised by the European Commission to be its main civil society interlocutor in structured dialogue with partner countries and in the framework of the Eastern Partnership. The Forum and its NPs take active part in the sectoral dialogues happening in the EaP countries and participate in most formats within the current EaP architecture. The EaP CSF is an accepted stakeholder of the EaP and is regularly consulted by the EU institutions.

**The overall objective** of the project “Support to activities of the EaP CSF in 2018-2020” with the budget of 4,5 mln EUR funded by the EC is to strengthen the EaP CSF and its role in the EaP policy development and implementation. This reflects Goal 3 of the EaP CSF strategy for 2018-2020. Financial support to third parties (regranting) is one of the purposes of the grant.

The overall objective will be achieved via the following **specific objectives**:

**Specific objective 1** To contribute to a more enriched and more people-oriented EaP agenda

**Specific objective 2** To increase EaP CSF’s engagement in dialogue on sector governance issues covered by 20 deliverables for 2020

**Specific objective 3** To strengthen mechanisms of trilateral dialogue with participation of civil society on the national level dedicated to the sector reforms in the frames of the EaP

**Specific objective 4** To make the Forum’s structures and internal processes more effective

The project will achieve the following results:

**Result 1.1** The EaP CSF’s voice and quality expertise becomes indispensable part of the dialogue in the frame of the new EaP architecture

**Result 1.2** Quality policy documents are available for advocacy and participation in the EaP Platforms and panels

**Result 2.1** Increased technical capacity of EaP CSF's members to engage in dialogue on sector governance issues covered by 20 Deliverables for 2020 on the regional level

**Result 3.1:** Strengthened and institutionalised sectoral dialogues with participation of the civil society in each of the six EaP countries

**Result 3.2** The policy-makers in the EaP countries and the EU are alerted on the negative developments in the operating environment for civil society and the cases of civil society activists' harassments

**Result 4.1** A strengthened and more engaged membership of the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum

**Result 4.2** National Platforms are fully integrated into the Forum's structure and functioning, and have developed concrete policy priorities and/or action/work plans consistent/in line with the Forum's strategy/priorities

**Result 4.3** Gender is mainstreamed at all levels of the Forum

**Result 4.4** The outreach strategy of the Forum is developed and put in place leading to improved visibility and brand consistency

**Result 4.5** To strengthen the quality of the Financial Support to Third Parties (Regranting to WGs and Granting to NPs)

**Result 4.6** To consolidate the work of the Secretariat by strengthening internal processes and maximising resources

### **Objectives of the Evaluation**

The current grant of the European Commission to the EaP CSF for the period 2018-2020 stipulates external evaluation of the project in the last year of the project. The evaluation will cover the period between January 2018 to December 2019 and all project components. The evaluation will provide the assessment of the results achieved so far and contribute to learning by understanding what have been factors that made possible or created obstacles to the achievement of results and by identifying key lessons learned that would lead to improved future project of the EaP CSF that will be funded by the EC.

The main objectives of the evaluation is to provide to the governing body of the EaP CSF, the EaP CSF Secretariat, the EC and other stake-holders with overall independent assessment of the performance of the project, paying particular attention to the results achieved and key lessons learned, conclusions and related recommendations that will help in designing the new project that will be to a certain extent a continuation of the current one.

The evaluator(s) will assess the project using the six standard evaluation criteria: relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and signs of impact. A particular attention will be paid to relevance, effectiveness and impact.

The evaluation will:

1. assess the achievement of the specific objectives and results of the project. It will identify the intended and unintended outcomes.
2. look for signs of impact bearing in mind that the current project is a continuation of a similar project covering the period 2015-2017.

3. assess the coherence of the project design and if the project activities lead to the desired results and objectives.
4. provide recommendations on how the project activities can be adapted to the evolution of the EaP policy, especially with regards to the principles of inclusivity and differentiation and expectations of the EaP CSF members.
5. provide recommendations regarding each strategic objectives and activities falling under it that should inform the development of the new project.

### Deliverables

The Inception Report and Final Report will be developed by the consultant(s).

The Inception Report will include the detailed outline of the evaluation methodology that will be presented and agreed with the EaP CSF Secretariat. It can include a combination of document review, semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions and/or online surveys, etc.

The structure of the Final Report will be agreed with the Secretariat of the EaP CSF and will:

- Contain an executive summary
- Be analytical in nature (both quantitative and qualitative)
- Be structured around issues and related findings/lessons learnt
- Include conclusions facilitating evidence-based decision making
- Include recommendations with focus on utilizing the evidence and learning from the evaluation for the designing of the new project and its actions

### Timeline & overview of key activities

Phases of the evaluation	Key activities	Outputs and meetings
<b><u>Inception Phase</u></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Initial document/data collection</li> <li>• Background analysis</li> <li>• Stakeholder analysis</li> <li>• Reconstruction of the Intervention Logic</li> <li>• Methodological design of the evaluation (Evaluation Questions with judgement criteria, indicators and methods of data collection and analysis) and evaluation matrix</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Kick-off meeting with the Secretariat</i> [via remote conference] – 16-17 March</li> <li>• Inception report including the detailed methodology - By 30 March</li> </ul>
<b><u>Desk Phase</u></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In-depth document analysis (focused on the Evaluation Questions)</li> <li>• Identification of information gaps and of hypotheses to be tested in the interviews</li> <li>• Methodological design of the interviews</li> </ul>	

Phases of the evaluation	Key activities	Outputs and meetings
<b><u>Primary evidence gathering Phase</u></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gathering of primary evidence with the use of the most appropriate techniques</li> <li>• Data collection and analysis (linked to the hypotheses to be tested in the field and in view of filling the gaps, if defined during a desk phase)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Intermediary Note or Validation meeting with presentation of initial findings (possible online) – By 27 April</li> </ul>
<b><u>Synthesis phase</u></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Final analysis of findings (with focus on the Evaluation Questions)</li> <li>• Formulation of the overall assessment, conclusions and recommendations</li> <li>• Reporting</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Draft Final Report - By 11 May</li> <li>• Executive Summary according to the standard template published in the EVAL module</li> <li>• Final Report - By 25 May</li> </ul>

## Budget

The maximum budget allocation for the Evaluation is €30.000 inclusive of the fees, taxes and miscellaneous expenses.

## Required Expertise

The evaluation will be conducted by a consultant or a team of two consultants. The consultant or the team leader (in case of two consultants) shall have at least 7 years of proven experience in the evaluation of EU-funded projects. Experience with evaluation of EU-funded projects in the EaP region is required. A good knowledge of the EaP policy and situation in the EaP countries is desirable. Experience evaluating projects implemented by civil society organisations is desirable. The language of the assignment and the Evaluation Report shall be English. Russian language skill will be considered an advantage.

## Application procedure

Interested consultant(s) should submit an Expression of Interest to [admin@eap-csf.eu](mailto:admin@eap-csf.eu) with “Evaluation” in the subject line.

The Expression of Interest should include:

- A brief motivation letter highlighting relevant expertise and experience including a brief summary of recent evaluations conducted
- CV
- Proposed outline of methodology for the evaluation (2 pages max)
- Daily rate of the consultant/s

The deadline for the submission of the expression of interest is 5 March 2020.

The Expression of Interests will be reviewed by the Secretariat, who can request a submission of a more detailed methodology. Please note that only successful applicants will be contacted.